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EURIPIDES

TITLE:

BACCHAE AND
HERACLIDAE ...

PLACE:

OXFORD

DATE:

1828

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Bacchae.

Engl. 1828

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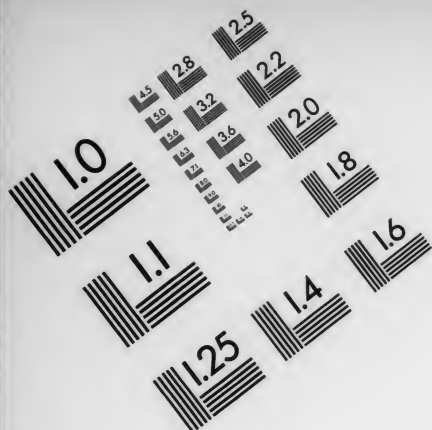
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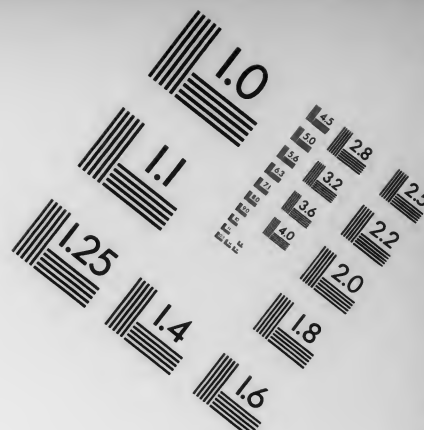
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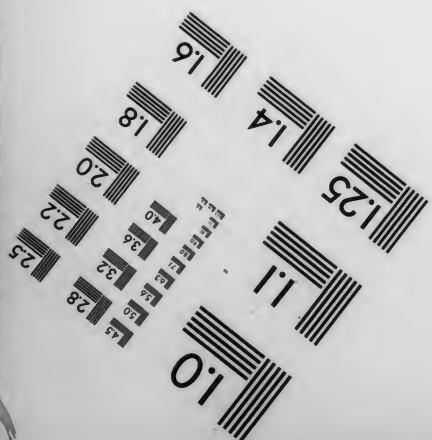
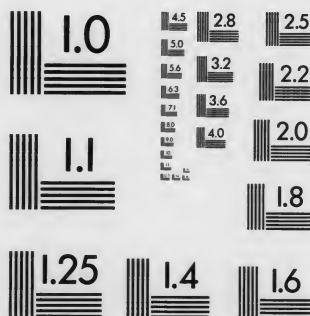
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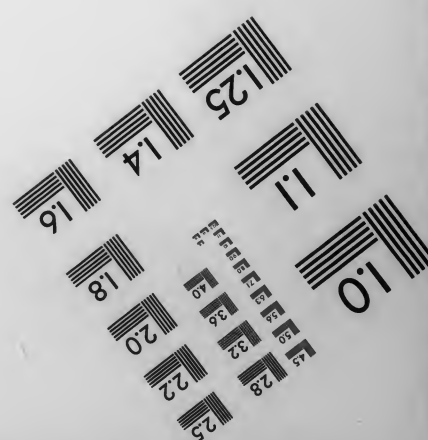
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THE
BACCHÆ, AND HERACLIDÆ,
OF
EURIPIDES:

TRANSLATED
INTO
ENGLISH PROSE.

J.H. Foote

THE
BACCHÆ, AND HERACLIDÆ,
OF
EURIPIDES:

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH PROSE,

FROM THE

TEXT OF ELMSEY.

WITH NOTES.

OXFORD:

H. SLATTER, HIGH STREET:

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THE BACCHÆ.

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PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

BACCHUS.

TIRESIAS.

CADMUS.

PENTHEUS.

CHORUS OF BACCHÆ.

SERVANT.

MESSENGERS.

AGAVE.

THE BACCHÆ.¹

BACCHUS.

I HAVE come to this land of the Thebans, Bacchus the son of Jove, to whom Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, formerly gave birth, as she was freed from her pains by the blaze of the winged lightning. But having assumed a mortal form in exchange for that of a God, I now resort to the fountains of Dirce and the streams of Ismenus: and I behold, beside her house, this tomb of my mother who perished by the thunder, and the smoking ruins of the abode, and the flames of the fire of heaven, which still live and mark for ever the wrongs inflicted by Juno on my mother. But my praises are due to Cadmus, who hath set apart from profaning feet this plain, where his daughter is entombed, and which I have screened around with the verdant clusters of the vine. Having left the Lydian² and Phrygian fields that abound with gold, and passing to the scorched plains of Persia, the walls of Bactria, the inclement country³ of

(1) A wretched French Critic has ranked this beautiful Drama in the same satirical class to which the Cyclops more obviously belongs. It would be idle to waste words in refutation of such absurdity; as it would be equally needless to inform the reader of taste, that no play has survived the wreck of ancient literature which more abounds with all the truest beauties of poetry.

(2) "Bacchus in Lydiâ et Phrygiâ educatus est: postea vir factus, Persiam, Bactriam, Mediam, Arabiam, Ioniam bello subegit. Constructio igitur est: λιπὼν δὲ τὰς πολυχρόσους γῆας Λυδῶν Φρυγῶν τε, ἐπελθὼν τε ἡλιοβαλόντων πλάκας Περσῶν, Βάκτριά τε τέχνη, &c."—MUSGRAVE.

(3) "Mediam rectè poëta vocat δίσχεμον, i. e. frigidam; nam Ecbatana erat metropolis Mediæ, ubi Persarum reges et Parthorum postea æstiva habebant: frigida enim est Media, testante Strabone." Lib. XI.—BARNES.

the Medes, the blest Arabia, and all the tract of Asia that lies by the salt sea, having its cities with their fair towers full of mingled Greeks' and Barbarians; and having there led the dance, and established my rites, that I might be manifest as a deity to mortals; I have come to this city, the first in Greece. In Thebes, the first of all the Grecian realms, I have raised the shout, having flung the fawn-skin over my limbs, and having seized in my hand the thyrsus, the spear with ivy bound: for the sisters' of my mother, whom it least became, have said that Bacchus was not sprung from Jove; but that Semele, embraced by some mortal, ascribed, on the crafty advice of Cadmus, the errors of her love to the God; in return for which they arrogantly proclaim that Jove slew her, because she had falsely boasted of his alliance. I have therefore driven these dames from their homes in phrensy, (for, distracted in their minds, they are now dwelling in the mountains,) and I have compelled them to assume the insignia' of my rites; and of all the female race of the Cadmeans, as many as have attained to womanhood, I have driven by madness from their houses; and, mingled together with the sons of Cadmus beneath the shade of the green pines, they are seated on the lofty rocks. For it is necessary that this city should fully learn, even though unwilling, the mystery of my orgies, in which it is untaught; and that I should justify the cause of my mother Semele, by appearing to mortals as the deity whom she bore to Jove. Cadmus, in the mean while, has yielded his honours and royal power to Pentheus, the son of his daughter, who wages war against my religion, and rejects me from the libations, and makes no mention of me in the

(1) This, of course, is a very gross anachronism; as it was not till long after the time of Cadmus that the Grecian colonies were founded in Asia Minor. Elmsley, in taking notice of the circumstance, has justly observed, that mistakes of this kind are constantly committed by Euripides.

(2) Ino, Autonoe, and Agave.

(3) "Hunc Baccharum apparatus fuisse apparet, nebridæ, sindones, mitras, ferulas, pampinos, hederam, thyrsos, tibias, fistulas, tintinnabula, tympana."—BARNES.

prayers. I will therefore manifest myself to him, and to all the Thebans, as having been born a God; and having arranged all matters well here, I will remove, and again reveal myself to another land. But if the Theban citizens should desire, in their wrath, to drive my votaries from the mountain with arms, I will encounter them, and lead the bands of my Mænades. I have, for this cause, assumed a mortal form, and changed my person to the likeness of a man. But, O ye who left Tmolus, (the lofty barrier of Lydia!) ye maids of my inspired train', whom I brought from your Barbaric tribes to share my seats and attend my paths! uplift your timbrels, whose sound is native to the city* of the Phrygians, the invention of me and of Mother Rhea, and, going around this royal abode of Pentheus, awake their notes, so that the city of Cadmus may witness the scene. But I, going to the vales of Cithæron, where the Bacchæ abide, with them will lead the dance.

CHORUS.

From the land of Asia, leaving the sacred Tmolus, I wildly speed in honour of Bromius—a toil that is sweet, a labour that is lightly felt, as I pour my blessings for the Bacchic God. Who is in the way? who is in the way? Let him depart from these courts, and let every one still his voice in holy silence'; for I will ever, as is due, awake the praises of Bacchus. O happy is he, who, favoured of heaven, and skilled in the rites of the Gods, consecrates his life, and imbues his soul with our mysteries, following the Bacchic worship among the mountains, in a holy and purifying course; who, religiously observing the

(1) "Thiasus multitudinem rei divinæ causâ collectam, pompam quoque, quæ Dionysum comitabatur, significat."—BARNES.

(2) This expression is probably general; and does not refer, as Barnes would have it, to the particular city of Pessinus.

(3) If all were to depart, it seems rather unnecessary to tell them at the same time to keep silence. Musgrave has attempted an unsatisfactory explanation, by supposing that the words ἐκτροπος ἔστω apply to those who are ἐν ὁδοῖς, and the command which follows to those who are ἐν μελάρθοις.

orgies of the mighty Mother Cybele, and waving aloft the thyrsus, and crowned with ivy, gives honour to Bacchus. Haste, then, ye Bacchæ! haste to conduct from the mountains of Phrygia, to the scene of the spacious dance, the streets of Greece, the God who was in thunder born, Bacchus, the son of a God! Him did his mother, when possessed by the extreme throes of parturition, erst bring forth amid the winged lightnings of Jove, with an untimely birth, herself expiring by the stroke of the thunder. But Jupiter, the son of Saturn, immediately received the babe in the chambers of a womb: for having enclosed him in his thigh, he there fixed him with golden clasps, to lie concealed from Juno; and brought him forth when the Fates had perfected the horned God, and wreathed his head with a wreath of serpents; whence the Mænades, who bear the thyrsus, entwine the wild prey¹ with their ringlets. O Thebes, nurse of Semele, crown thyself with ivy! bloom, O bloom all around with the lovely blossoms of the verdant smilax, and wield in the Bacchic revelry the branches of the oak or pine! Wreath thy garments of the dappled fawn-skin with the twisted locks of the snowy fleece; and, with religious observance of the rites, seize the sportive wands. The whole land shall soon celebrate the dance. It is Bromius who leads his choirs to the mountain—to the mountain where the female crowd await him, being driven from the loom and the shuttle by the maddening influence of Bacchus. O sanctuary of the Curetes, and divine retreats of Crete, that saw the birth of Jove! it was amid your caves that the Corybantes of the triple crest invented for me this orbéd timbrel from the extended hide; and in the Bacchic rites they mingled its sound with the harmonious breathings that sweetly flow from the Phrygian flutes; and placed it in the hands of Mother Rhea, to awake

(1) "Manifestum est ἀγρῶν intelligi debere de captis serpentibus. Horatius, Carm. II. 19.

Tu separatis uvidus in jugis
Nodo coërces viperino
Bistonidum sine fraude crines."

BRUNCK.

its strains amid the acclaims of the Bacchæ. But the maddening Satyrs obtained the gift from the Mother Goddess¹, and united it to the dances of the Trieteric² festivals, in which Bacchus rejoices. O sweet is the life of the God³ in the mountains, when, leaving his nimble choirs, he descends to the plain, bearing the sacred garb of the fawn-skin, and hunting for the blood of the slaughtered goat, the rapture of the banquet without fire, ere he hurries in his course to the mountains of Phrygia and Lydia! It is Bromius who is our leader, Evøe! But the plain flows with milk; it flows with wine; it flows with the nectar of the bee⁴; and around there breathes an odour, as of the Syrian incense. And Bacchus, bearing the flame of the torch streaming from the cane, rushes along, exciting, as he speeds, his roaming bands, and rousing them with his shouts, and giving his luxuriant ringlets to flow to the gale; while high above the acclaim of the votaries he thus invokes them: "O haste, ye Bacchæ, delight of Tmolus that teems with gold! O haste, ye Bacchæ, to sing the praise of Bacchus to the deep music of the timbrel, in Bacchic measure hymning the Bacchic God with your Phrygian strains and voices, when the sweetly-breathing and sacred flute shall awake its sacred notes with harmony respon-

(1) "These two verses, hitherto little understood, ought, I think, to be rendered, "but the frantic Satyrs obtained it (i.e. the timbrel) from the Mother Goddess:" for the poet is giving a kind of history of the timbrel. Its invention was due to the Curetes and Corybantes, by whom it was delivered into the hands of Mother Rhea; and obtained from her by the Satyrs, who united it to the triennial dances with which Bacchus is delighted."—HEATH.

(2) The Trieteric Festivals were held in honour of the expedition of Bacchus into India, in which he was engaged for three years. They were of very ancient institution; and were first celebrated, according to Diodorus Siculus, by the Thracians and Thebans.

(3) It is not quite clear, whether the God or the votary is meant in the original; nor in either application is the sense of the passage good.

(4) "Fas pervicaces est mihi Thyadas,
Vinique fontem, lactis et uberes
Cantare rivos, atque truncis
Lapsa cavis iterare mella."—Hor. Carm. II. 19.

sive to the Mænades!" To the mountain then, to the mountain, the joyous Bacchanal (like a colt beside its mother in the pastures) directs with eager haste her bounding steps.

TIRESIAS.

Who at the gates will call Cadmus from the house, the son of Agenor, who, having left the city of Sidon, reared these towers of Thebes? Let some one go, and announce that Tiresias seeks him: but he knows himself about what I come, and how I, an old man', agreed with him, an older, to bind the thyrsus with leaves, and to wear the skins of the fawn, and to crown the head with the boughs of the ivy.

CADMUS.

O dearest friend, how quickly, though within the house, I recognised when I heard thy voice, wise from a wise speaker! and I have come prepared, bearing these ensigns of the God. For it behoves us, as far as is in our power, to exalt the glories of him who sprung from my daughter—of Bacchus, who hath been revealed as a God to men. Where is it fitting to begin the dance? or where to stay the foot, and shake the hoary head? Do thou, O aged Tiresias, explain to me, thy aged friend; for thou art wise. I feel as if I should neither weary by night nor by day in striking the earth with the thyrsus. We forget, with delight, that we are old men.

TIRES.—Your feelings, then, are the same as mine; for I both experience the vigour of youth, and will essay the dance.

CADMUS.—Shall we not then pass in chariots to the mountain?

TIRES.—But the God would not thus receive equal honour.

(1) Tiresias, though he talks of himself here as an old man, is yet represented, by all the Tragedians, as flourishing in vigour in the time of Eteocles and Polynices, who were in the fifth generation from Cadmus. Barnes had therefore good occasion to remark: "Valdè omnino erat necesse illum longævum fuisse; si quæ hujusmodi historiis fides habenda."

CADMUS.—I, an aged man, will conduct thy aged steps.

TIRES.—The God shall, without any toil, now conduct us to the spot.

CADMUS.—But shall we alone of the city dance in honour of Bacchus?

TIRES.—For we alone of the city think rightly; but the others think foolishly.

CADMUS.—It is tedious to delay: but take my hand.

TIRES.—Here, join and unite your hand with mine.

CADMUS.—Having been born a mortal, I will not slight the Gods.

TIRES.—We would not indulge in vain speculations respecting the Gods'. The traditions of our fathers, and those which coeval with time we have received, no argument shall shake, not even though its wisdom should have been sought from the highest minds. Some one may say, that I do not pay respect to my years, in proceeding to dance, and in crowning my head with ivy. Yet the God hath not defined if it be proper for a young man to dance, or for one of maturer years; but wishes to have common honours from all, and not to be the object of a partial worship.

CADMUS.—Since you, O Tiresias, do not behold this light, I will act for you as an interpreter of events. Pentheus is passing this way with haste to the house, the son of Echion, to whom I entrusted the power of this realm. How fluttered he appears! What new tidings in the world will he tell?

PENTHEUS.

I chanced, indeed, to be absent from this land; but I have heard the new evils that have arisen in this city—that our women have left their homes for the revels of false rites,

(1) "*Nihil nos nimis argutè de Diis exploramus. Hoc est, non convenit, ut curiosè in illorum placita inquiramus; obedientia nobis sufficit: nec est, ut illorum abscondita mysteria infideliter atque impiè rimemur, aut in disputationem trahamus; nam ut Tacitus: Sanctius est ac reverentiùs, de actis Deorum credere, quàm scire. Et mihi quidem videtur verè Aurea hæc esse sententia: Brevis est institutio vitæ honesta beataque, si credas.*"—BARNES.

and that they run frantic amid the shady mountains, this new God Bacchus, whoever he may be, honouring with the dance; that goblets full of wine stand in the midst of their choirs; and that, in various quarters, the votaries, skulking into lonely places, submit themselves to the embraces of the males, pretending indeed that they are inspired Mænades, but, in reality, preferring Venus to Bacchus. As many, therefore, as I have taken, my attendants have secured, with fetters on their hands, in the public prisons: but as many as are absent I will hunt from the mountain; Ino; and Agave, who bore me to Echion; and the mother of Actæon, I mean Autonoe: and, having fastened them in bonds of iron, will quickly make them cease from this evil worship of Bacchus. But they say that a certain stranger hath come from the Lydian land, an impostor and magician, fairly adorned as to his hair with golden locks, of ruddy countenance, and having in his eyes the graces of love, who holds converse by night and by day with our youthful maids, pretending to instruct them in the mystic rites of Bacchus. If I catch him within this house, I shall make him cease from beating the ground with the thyrsus, and from waving his ringlets in the air, by lopping off his head from his body. He says that he is the God Bacchus, and that he was formerly sewed up in the thigh of Jove; although Bacchus was consumed in the blaze of the lightning, along with his mother, because she had falsely claimed a nuptial alliance with Jove. Is it not worthy of the pains of strangling, that this stranger, whoever he is, should dare this insolence? But lo, another miracle! I behold the soothsayer Tiresias, habited in the dappled fawn-skins, and the father of my mother, a most ridiculous sight! waving the Bacchic wand. I am shocked, father, at beholding your age devoid of wisdom! Will you not shake off the ivy wreath? will you not free your hand from the thyrsus, O father of my mother? It is you, Tiresias, who have persuaded him to this. You would again wish, by introducing this new God among men, to observe the flights of birds, and to draw profit from the omens of fire. If your

hoary age did not protect you, you should have sat in chains in the midst of the Bacchæ, as a punishment for having introduced these pernicious rites: for where the sparkling juice of the vine is quaffed by women at the feast, you can no longer say that aught is chaste in their orgies¹.

CHORUS.—O impious words! Dost thou not reverence, O stranger, the Gods and Cadmus, who sowed the earth-born crop? Son of Echion as thou art, wilt thou dishonour thy race?

TIRES.—When a wise man shall gain a fair occasion for argument, there is no great difficulty in speaking well. But you, indeed, have a voluble tongue like the wise, and yet in your discourse no wisdom appears. A bold and powerful man who is able to speak, proves a dangerous citizen, if he be not gifted with discretion². But as to this new God, whom you deride, I am not able to express how great his name shall become in Greece. For there are two Powers, O youth, which claim the highest eminence among men—the Goddess Ceres (but she is the Earth, call her by which name you will) nourishes mortals with dry aliments; and the son of Semele, who came to rival her benefits, invented the liquid juice of the grape, and made it known to the world: a gift which bids wretched mortals forget their cares, when they have drank their fill from the founts of the vine; which imparts sleep, with oblivion of life's daily ills; and which alone can afford a charm to soothe every sorrow³. Bacchus, having been born a God,

*can I judge
rally
speech
insult*

(1) The speech of Pentheus is full of very just reflections and good morality, and one cannot help feeling that he has got much the best of the question. The concluding sentiment will readily recall to the reader a noted line of Chaucer, which, in more powerful language, speaks the same truth.

(2) Euripides is here supposed to glance at Cleophon, against whom he entertained an enmity.

(3) It would be endless to accumulate, either from ancient or modern authors, the many passages which have been devoted to the same praise; but no one can forget the beautiful language in which Xenophon represents Socrates to have extolled the gift of Bacchus: *ὄλως ἄρδων τὰς ψυχὰς, τὰς*

is poured in libation to the Gods; so that mortals, through him, derive their blessings. And yet you deride him, as having been sewed up¹ in the thigh of Jove. I will explain² to you the right meaning of the words. When Jupiter snatched him from the blaze of the lightning, and bore the new-born babe to Olympus, Juno wished to cast him out from the heavens; but Jupiter thwarted her designs, with the skill of a God. Having burst a part of the æther which encompasses the earth, he there placed Bacchus, giving him up as an hostage, to appease the wrath of Juno: but in time men said that he was nursed in the thigh of Jupiter, changing the name³, because the God had once given him as an hostage to the Goddess Juno, and falsifying the tale. But this God is a prophet; for the Bacchic inspiration and phrensy have much oracular power; and when the God hath taken strong possession of the body, he makes his maddened votaries to predict the future. And he also partakes of a share of the attributes of Mars: for fear hath confounded a host in arms and in battle-array, before they had lifted the spear; and these frantic terrors are caused by Bacchus. You shall yet behold him on the rocks of Delphi, bounding with his torches over the summits of its double crests, striking the earth with his thyrsus, and waving its Bacchic boughs, and illustrious through Greece. Be therefore, O Pentheus, persuaded by me. Do not proudly deem that your sovereignty has power among men; nor, if you think so, (but your thoughts are distempered,) think that in this you are wise: but admit the God into this

τὰς μὲν λύπας, ὥσπερ ὁ Μαιδραγόρας ἀνθρώπους, κοιμίζει, τὰς δὲ φιλοφροσύνας, ὥσπερ ἔλαιον φλόγα, ἐγείρει.

(1) This, probably, was not the only time that Bacchus was sewed up.

(2) This promised explanation will be found to make the matter considerably darker.

(3) By substituting *μηρὸς*, which signifies "thigh," for *ἄμμος*, "hostage." In explanation of the latter word, it may be mentioned that Juno is sometimes considered, by the ancient writers, as synonymous with the air; and that hence the expression of Bacchus having been given as an hostage to the Goddess, denotes no more than his having obtained a lodging in the element.

country, and pour libations, and join the Bacchic revel, and crown the head. Bacchus cannot compel women to be chaste in the passions of love; but chastity is always inherent in the nature, as a shield against every trial. You ought to regard this; for, even in the Bacchic rites, she who is chaste will not be corrupted. But consider how you are rejoiced when many stand by your gates, and the city magnifies the name of Pentheus. Now he too, I doubt not, takes delight in being honoured. I, therefore, and Cadmus, whom you mock, will both wreath our brows with ivy, and join the dance, a hoary pair: yet still the dance must be observed, and I will not contend against the God being persuaded by your words: for you are mad in the worst degree, and cannot derive relief even from magic charms, since it is not without their influence that your distemper has arisen¹.

CHORUS.—Old man, you do not disgrace Phœbus by your words; and you shew your wisdom by honouring Bacchus, the mighty God.

CADMUS.—Tiresias, my son, has advised you well. Abide with us, and do not depart from sacred customs: for now you are both fluttered with passion, and in your thoughts judge nought aright. Even if Bacchus be not a God, as you assert, let him be called one by you; and maintain with glorious falsehood that he is, in order that Semele may both seem to have given birth to a God, and that honour may accrue to all our race. Have you not seen the wretched fate of Actæon, whom the ravenous hounds which he had reared tore to pieces in the woods, because he had boasted that he excelled Diana in the chace? Beware lest you perish like him! (come hither, and let me crown your head with ivy,) but with us pay honour to the God.

(1) "Reisk. vertit: *neque propterea insanis, quia his medicamentis cares*. Contra Heath. censet, *φάρμακα* esse non *medicamenta* solum, sed omne genus *veneficiorum, incantamentorum, et fascinationum*; omnia denique, quæ præter naturæ ordinem usitatum in hominum mentes aut corpora influunt. Dixisse igitur Tiresiam, Pentheum jam tunc à Baccho irato fascinatam et mente captam insanire cœpisse."—BECK.

PEN.—You shall not touch me with your hand; but shall go and join the Bacchanals, and shall not wipe off your folly on me. I demand the punishment from this prophet who prompted your absurdities. Let some one quickly hasten, and, going to his seats, where he observes the flight of birds, unloosen them with levers and upset them, overturning and confounding all together; and cast his sacred chaplets to the winds and storms. For by doing this I shall most keenly pain him. But let others, going through the city, seek out this effeminate stranger, who introduces this new disease among our women, and pollutes our beds: and if ye shall take him, bring him hither in chains; that, having met with the punishment of stoning, he may die, and see a bitter end of his revelling in Thebes.

TIRES.—O wretched man! how little you know what words you are saying. You are now mad, and had before departed from your senses. Let us go, Cadmus, and supplicate in behalf of him, although he is without pity; and in behalf of the city, that the God inflict no punishment in consequence. But follow me with your ivy rod, and try to support my body, as I will to support yours; for it were disgraceful that two old men should fall. Still, let come what may, we must obey Bacchus, the son of Jove. I fear, Cadmus, lest Pentheus bring sorrow to your house: I speak not from my prophetic skill, but from his conduct; for a fool says what is foolish.

CHORUS.—O sacred Power¹, revered among the Gods! O sacred Power, who wieldest thy golden sceptre beneath the earth! hearest thou these threats of Pentheus? Hearest thou his blasphemous taunts against the son of Semele, who was born amid the thunder, the God who of all the blessed Powers

(1) The Commentators are all at variance as to the Goddess who is here addressed; and many of them think that the invocation extends to two separate Powers. Even the judicious Elmsley wastes a long note on this trifling matter. It seems clear, that the Chorus not only make their appeal to Proserpine, but that they had no idea of associating in the same strain any less potent name with that of the Goddess, whom they distinctly mark by her golden sceptre and sovereignty beneath the earth.

is the most revered, when the banquet brightens amid the wreaths of lovely flowers? who owns these attributes to lead the revel to his choirs, to smile with joy at the strains of the flute, and to bid sorrow fly when, at the banquet of the Gods, the sparkling juice of the vine shall appear; and when, amid his festivals, where the ivy is worn, the goblet causes sleep to enwrap the votary. Of unbridled tongues and of lawless folly, the end is mishap: but a life of quiet, and thoughts of wisdom, both remain unshaken, and are the firm support of houses; for the Gods, though dwelling afar in the heavens, regard the affairs of mortals. But human wisdom is folly, and pride that rises above mortal thoughts is vain. Life is short; and whoever, in its course, pursues too lofty objects, shall not gain those which were within his reach. These are the ways of mad and, in my opinion, of evil-minded men. Would that I might win my way to Cyprus, the isle of Venus, where dwell the Loves that soothe the souls of mortals; or to Paphos¹, which is fertilized by the streams of the barbaric river, that gush, though unfed by showers, from a hundred mouths! Where Pieria, the seat of the Muses, blooms in beauty, and where the sacred steepes of Olympus arise, thither, O Bromius, Bromius, conduct my steps, thou God whose leading we obey! There dwell the Graces, and there Desire; and there it is lawful for the Bacchæ to celebrate their rites. The God who sprung from Jove rejoices in the feast; and loves Peace, the Goddess who bestows wealth and fosters youth: and alike hath he permitted the rich and the poor to share the delights of wine unmingled with pain. But he hates him to whom it is not a study to lead a happy life, both by day and friendly night. Banish, then, wise thoughts, and such sentiments as spring from men of superfluous subtlety; for that which the

*Opinion of
mad to
new
is not
necessarily*

(1) "Πάφον, fortè θάρον, insulam Ægypti apud Alexandriam; sanè in sequentibus Nilum describit. Mirè desultorius est Euripides, et verè bacchatur cum Bacchis suis, e Cypro ad Nilum, et statim in Macedoniam transiliens."—REISKE.

meaner crowd hath approved and acted upon, I would say to you was right¹.

SERVANT.

We come, O Pentheus, having taken this prey, for which you sent us; nor did we set forth on an unsuccessful pursuit. But this savage animal proved tame to us, nor withdrew his steps in flight, but yielded, without reluctance, his hands, neither pale with fear, nor changing the ruddy glow of his cheek; but, smiling, he permitted us to bind and lead him away, and he remained with us, making my task easy². And I, through respect, said, "O stranger, not willingly I lead you away, but by the commands of Pentheus, who sent me." But as to the Bacchæ, whom you seized, and confined and bound with chains in the public prison, they, escaping from their fetters, bound away to the sacred groves, invoking Bromius their God: their chains spontaneously fell from off their feet³, and the bolts unfastened the doors without the aid of mortal hand. This man hath come, endowed with many marvellous powers, to this city of Thebes; but it is your part to consult as to what remains.

PEN.—Hold fast his hands; for, being entangled in the toils, he is not so swift as to be able to escape me. But in your person, O stranger, you are well formed to win the love of women, for which purpose you have come to Thebes: for your ringlets flow, not as taught by the toils of the palæstra, but descending loosely by the cheek, and all expressive of desire; and you shew a skin whose whiteness hath been preserved with studied care, not exposed to the rays of the sun, but cherished in the shade,

(1) "Sensus est: *Rectius de his rebus sentire et agere mihi videntur vulgus quàm philosophi.*"—ELMSLEY.

(2) We prefer in this passage the interpretation of Musgrave: "*Meum operam facilem reddens*:" to that of Elmsley: "*Facilem sibi reddens*, id est, placidè et patienter ferens."

(3) "Hunc et sequentem versum transtulit Ovidius, *Metam.* III. 699.

Sponte suâ patuisse fores, lapsasque lacertis

Sponte suâ, fama est, nullo solvente, catenas."—BRUNCK.

that you might attract love by your beauty. Inform me, then, in the first place, who you are by birth.

BACCHUS.—No vain boast shall be spoken by me, for it is easy to answer your question. You, perchance, have heard of the flowery Tmolus¹?

PEN.—I know it; the mountain which encircles the city of Sardis.

BACCHUS.—Thence I am, and Lydia is my country.

PEN.—But whence do you bring these rites to Greece?

BACCHUS.—Bacchus, the son of Jove, instructed me in their solemnities.

PEN.—But is there in that country a Jove, who begets new Gods?

BACCHUS.—No; for it was here he wedded Semele.

PEN.—Was it by night or by day that Bacchus constrained you to his worship?

BACCHUS.—Seeing, and seen; and he imparted to me his mystic rites.

PEN.—In what form were these mystic rites disclosed to you?

BACCHUS.—This may not be revealed to the knowledge of uninitiated mortals.

PEN.—Do his rites bring any advantage to the votaries?

BACCHUS.—It is not lawful for you to hear; but the secret is well worth knowing.

PEN.—You have ingeniously forged this, that I may wish to hear it.

BACCHUS.—The mysteries of the God abhor him who practises impiety.

PEN.—Since you say distinctly that you saw the God, what was his appearance?

BACCHUS.—Such as he chose to assume: I did not prescribe it.

(1) "Tmolus, mons Lydiæ, cujus ad radices Sardis urbs; nec frustra ἀνθεμάδην Τμῶλον vocat ποῦτα: nam Solinus, Columella et Martianus testantur hunc montem esse florentissimum croco; et Theophrastus: Τμῶλος ἔχει ἀμπελον."—BARNES.

PEN.—You have again skilfully diverted my question, and answered nothing.

BACCHUS.—One who says what is wise, will appear to the ignorant not to be wise.

PEN.—Have you come here first to introduce this God?

BACCHUS.—All the Barbarians celebrate with the dance his rites.

PEN.—Because they are much inferior in wisdom to the Greeks.

BACCHUS.—In this respect much superior; but their customs are different.

PEN.—Do you celebrate these sacred rites by night or by day?

BACCHUS.—Chiefly by night; for darkness inspires awe.

PEN.—Its opportunities are treacherous, and corrupting for women.

BACCHUS.—Even by day may any one find the means of shame.

PEN.—It is fit that you should suffer punishment, for your pernicious sophistries.

BACCHUS.—And you, for your folly and your impiety towards the God.

PEN.—How bold is this Bacchanal! and not unpractised in argument.

BACCHUS.—Tell me what I must suffer? what dreadful punishment will you inflict upon me?

PEN.—In the first place, I will cut away your soft ringlets.

(1) “Ὁ Βάκχος non est Διόνυσος, sed masculinum à feminino Βάκχη derivatum. Ita per contemptum τὸν θηλύμορφον ξένον appellat Pentheus. Nemo enim eum Bacchum esse suspicatur.”—ELMSLEY.

(2) “Hæc in usum suum transsumpsit Horatius, *Epist.* I. 16. in fine:

Vir bonus et sapiens audebit dicere: Pentheu,
Rector Thebarum, quid me perferre patique
Indignum coges? Adimam bona? Nempè pecus, rem,
Lectos, argentum: tollas licet. In manicis et
Compedibus sævo te sub custode tenebo.
Ipse Deus, simulatque volam, me solvet. Opinor,
Hoc sentit: moriar; mors ultima linea rerum est.” BRUNCK.

BACCHUS.—These locks are sacred: I cherish them for the God!

PEN.—Next, deliver up that thyrsus from your hands.

BACCHUS.—Do you, yourself, take it from me: I bear it the gift of Bacchus.

PEN.—And we shall securely keep your body in a dungeon.

BACCHUS.—The God himself will free me, when I wish it.

PEN.—Yes, when you call upon him, standing amid the Bacchæ.

BACCHUS.—Even now, being near and present, he beholds what I suffer.

PEN.—Where is he? for to my eyes, at least, he is invisible.

BACCHUS.—With me: but you, being impious, cannot behold him.

PEN.—Seize him: he throws contempt on both Thebes and me.

BACCHUS.—I, in my senses, forbid you, who are mad, to bind me.

PEN.—But I, having greater power than you, command them to bind you.

BACCHUS.—You do not know that you live, nor see, nor who you are.

PEN.—I am Pentheus, the son of Agave, and of my father Echion.

BACCHUS.—You are rightly destined, by your name, to misfortune.

PEN.—Away: shut him up beside the stalls of the horses, that he may look on the gloom of darkness. There lead

(1) ——— “molles tibi sumere thyrsos,
Te lustrare choro, sacrum tibi pascere crinem.”

Virg. Æn. VII. 389.

(2) “In the Greek language, πένθος signifies grief. At the conclusion of the dialogue between Cadmus and Tiresias, a few pages before, the latter has already made the same miserable pun; and Theocritus has debased his 26th Idyllium by it:

Ἐξ ὄρεος πένθημα, καὶ οὐ Πενθῆα φέρουσαι.”

WODHULL.

the dance; but as for these women, whom you have come with in your train, the partners of your offences, we shall either sell them as slaves, or, having stayed their hands from this noise and beating of the timbrel, employ them as domestics at the loom.

BACCHUS.—I will now depart: for it is not fitting to endure that which ought not to be inflicted. But Bacchus, whose existence you deny, will demand from you a retribution for these indignities; since, in injuring me, you lead him into chains.

CHORUS.—Daughter of Achelous, O sacred Dirce, happy virgin! thou didst erst receive in thy founts the child of Jove, when the God who begot him snatched him in his thigh from the immortal blaze of the lightning, exclaiming these words: "Come, Dithyrambus, enter this thy father's womb! I proclaim thee by this name, O Bacchus, for Thebes to hail." Yet thou, O blessed Dirce, refusest to let me hold by thee the revels in which the chaplet is worn. Why dost thou disown me? why dost thou avoid me? Thou shalt yet, I swear by the beauteous clusters of the vine of Bacchus! pay due regard to the worship of Bromius. What wrath, what wrath does Pentheus display, the offspring of the dragon-brood that sprang from the ground, whom the earth-born Echion engendered, a monster of savage aspect, no mortal man, but, like a bloody giant, the adversary of the Gods! Me, the votary of Bromius, will he quickly bind with chains; and he already detains within his house the leader of our revels, concealed in gloomy dungeon. Dost thou behold these things, O Bacchus, son of Jove? dost thou behold thy prophets in the struggles of necessity? Come, shaking thy thyrsus as thou descendest the gleaming steeps of Olympus, and repress the insolence of the bloody tyrant! Wilt thou then lead, O Bacchus, thy choirs with the thyrsus to Nysa, the nurse of wild beasts, or to the Corycian cliffs? or, haply, to the leafy shades and caverns of Olympus, where Orpheus, when of old he struck the lyre, drew the trees around him by his strains, and drew around him the beasts that roam the wild. O

blest Pieria! Bacchus honours thee; and soon will he come with mystic revelry and dance, and bring his hurrying Mænades, after he has passed the rapid flow of Axius, and Lydia¹, the rich dispenser and author of prosperity; which, I have heard, fertilizes a country renowned for the steed, with the fairest of waters.

BACCHUS.—O hear, ye Bacchæ! O hear, ye Bacchæ, my voice!

CHORUS.—Who is this? Whence came the sounds of Evius, that called upon me?

BACCHUS.—Io, Io, I again repeat, the son of Semele, the son of Jove.

CHORUS.—O Bromius our lord, O Bromius our lord, come now to our band! O dreadful earthquake, that shakes the ground! Ah! ah! soon shall these palaces of Pentheus be shattered in ruins.

BACCHUS.—Bacchus is within these courts. Pay homage to him.

CHORUS.—The homage we accord. Behold these marble capitals parting from the pillars. The shout of Bromius shall soon be raised within the abode.

BACCHUS.—Kindle the blazing torch of the lightning, and consume the house of Pentheus.

CHORUS.—Ah! ah! dost thou not behold the fire? and does there not brighten around the sacred tomb of Semele the flame which was left of old, when she perished amid the lightning by the blazing bolt of Jove? Cast, ye Mænades, cast on the earth your trembling bodies: for our king, Bacchus, the son of Jove, invades these palaces, and lays their towers in the dust.

BACCHUS.—Ye barbaric maids, have ye fallen to the ground thus confounded by fear? Ye have perceived, it would appear, how Bacchus shook the house of Pentheus.

(1) Barnes has taken this to mean the Asiatic Lydia; but Musgrave has more correctly suggested that there was a river of this name, which separated Boeotia from Macedonia, to which the poet must of course have referred.

But raise your bodies, and be of good cheer, and let the trembling depart from your limbs.

CHORUS.—O greatest glory of our inspired revels, how gladly in my lonely desolation I behold thee!

BACCHUS.—Did ye sink in despair, when I was led within the house of Pentheus, as about to be cast into the gloomy dungeon?

CHORUS.—How should I not despair? Who was there to protect me, if you had met with calamity? But how have you been freed, after falling into the power of an impious man?

BACCHUS.—I easily freed myself, without any toil.

CHORUS.—Did he not bind your hands with the links of the chain?

BACCHUS.—In this, too, I mocked him; so that, when he thought to bind me, he neither touched nor reached me, but was fed with delusions: for having found a bull by the stalls, where he took and imprisoned me, he cast his fetters around the knees and cloven feet of the animal, panting with fury, dropping sweat from every pore, and biting his lips with his teeth. But I, being present and near, sat quietly, and looked on; and, in the mean time, Bacchus coming, shook the house, and lighted up the flame on the tomb of his mother; and Pentheus, when he saw it, thinking the house was on fire, rushed hither and thither, commanding his domestics to bring water; and every slave was at work, toiling in vain. But Pentheus relinquishing this labour, on the idea that I had escaped, and having snatched his dark sword, rushed within the house: and then Bromius, as it appeared to me, (I speak what I thought,) made a greater light in the hall; and Pentheus hurried to assail it, and smote at the lucid air as if he were slaying me. But Bacchus, after this, both afflicted him with other ills, and levelled his house with the ground; and the whole structure hath been demolished to its lord, who looked

(1) "Non omne palatium dirutum dici Prev. monet, sed eam tantum partem ubi Bacchæ et Bacchus ipse captivi tenebantur; nam in seqq. comme-

to his sorrow on my chains. At last, laying aside his sword, he sinks exhausted beneath the toil; for being a man, he dared to engage in battle with a God: and I came quietly from the royal abode to you, taking no heed of Pentheus. But, as it appears to me, (for the step of a sandal sounds within the house,) he will presently come to the vestibule. What, after these mishaps, will he say? Yet I will bear with him mildly, even though he come breathing violent fury; for it is the part of a wise man to exercise temperate forbearance.

PEN.—I have suffered dreadful things. The stranger, who but now was bound in chains, has escaped me. Ha! there is the man. What may this mean? How, having escaped without, do you appear at the vestibule of my house?

BACCHUS.—Stay your foot; and substitute a calm manner¹ for your wrath.

PEN.—By what means, having escaped your chains, have you passed without?

BACCHUS.—Have I not said? have you not heard that some one would free me?

PEN.—Who? for you are ever introducing new sayings.

BACCHUS.—He who rears for men the thickly-clustering vine.

PEN.—You have falsely ascribed this honour to Bacchus. I command that the gates of all the towers around be fastened.

BACCHUS.—Why? cannot Gods pass the battlements of walls?

PEN.—You are wise, wise in all but what you ought to be wise.

commemoratur palatii pars adhuc integra." BECK. Such an explanation is absurd, as the poet's word is of course as good in one passage as another. It is needless to remind the reader that the plays of Euripides are full of inconsistencies; among which, this fall and restoration of the palace are to be classed.

(1) Elmsley has correctly remarked, that *ῥουχον νόδα* means the same as *ῥουχον τρόπον*, in which sense we also find the phrase used in the *Medæ*, v. 217.

BACCHUS.—I have been born wise in those things where wisdom is most required. But do you first listen, and attend to the words of this man, who comes from the mountain to announce some intelligence to you; for I will stay by you, and not attempt to fly.

MESSENGER.

O Pentheus, sovereign of this Theban soil! I am come from Cithæron, where never thaw the shining flakes of white snow.

PEN.—But bringing what important tidings have you come?

MESS.—Having seen the maddening¹ Bacchæ, who in phrensy darted with their white feet² from this land, I am come, O king, wishing to tell to you and to the city what dreadful deeds, and more than marvellous, they do. But I wish to hear whether I may speak of these scenes with full freedom, or whether I must contract my account; for I fear, O king, your hasty spirit, your rash anger, and more than kingly pride.

PEN.—Speak, since you shall in nought be injured by me; for it is not fitting to feel angry towards the just. But the more dreadful the facts which you disclose concerning the Bacchæ, the more severely shall we visit with punishment the wretch who suggested these arts to our women.

MESS.—The pasturing herds of oxen were just approaching to the summits of the mountain, when the sun sent forth his rays to gladden earth with their heat, and I behold three companies of female bands, of whom Autonoe commanded one, Agave your mother the second, and Ino the third. But they all slept with their bodies loosely laid, some resting their backs on the boughs of pines, and some among the leaves of the oak, having carelessly reposed their heads on the ground; but in chaste manner, and not, as you

(1) "*Πορριάδας, furiosas*. Translatio sumpta est à rabiosis Glauci equibus, de quibus Scholiastæ ad Nostri Orest. v. 312. et Phœn. v. 1140."—MUSGRAVE.

(2) "Ratio epitheti videtur esse, quòd Bacchæ nudis pedibus plerumque, vel semper, incederent."—MUSGRAVE.

assert, intoxicated with the wine-cup and the sound of the flute, and courting the solitudes of the wood to pursue the pleasures of Venus. But your mother, standing in the midst of the Bacchæ, called on them with shouts to raise their bodies from sleep, when she heard the lowings of the horned herd; and they, banishing genial sleep from their eyes, sprang to their feet, a marvel to behold for their seemly array, the young and the old, and virgins yet unmarried. And first, indeed, they spread their descending ringlets over their shoulders, and they resumed their fawn-skins, whoever had the cinctures of their garments unloosed; and they bound up the dappled skins with serpents that licked their cheeks. But some, bearing in their arms the kid or wild whelps of the wolf, gave them the white milk, to whomsoever (having left their new-born babes at home) the breast was still swelling with that fount: and they placed on their heads chaplets of ivy, of oak, and of flowery smilax. Then one, taking a thyrsus, smote the rock, whence a limpid stream of water gushed forth; and another plunged her wand in the ground, and there the God bid a fount of wine arise; while all that desired the white liquid, by removing the soil with the tips of their fingers, got abundance¹ of milk; and from each thyrsus of ivy the sweet streams of honey kept flowing². If, therefore, you had been present, and had seen these sights, you would have approached with worship the God whom you now revile. But we herdsmen and shepherds assembled together, expressing to each other, in the common debate of words, how strange and worthy of wonder were their deeds; and one who had wandered at times to the city³, and

(1) Literally, *swarms*.

(2) "Flumina jam lactis, jam flumina nectaris ibant; Flavaque de viridi stillabant ilice mella." *Ovid. Met. I. 111.*

(3) "*Πάντης κατ' ἄστυ* est, qui non semper rure vixit, sed aliquoties urbem invisit, idèquæ ceteris pastoribus et bubulcis legem dare dignum se putat. *Τριβων λόγων* est, qui oratores audiendo disertus factus est." *ELMSLEY.* The latter interpretation is rather gratuitous. If the man had enjoyed the advantages described, why should he not have been able to speak himself?

was versed in speaking, thus addressed us all: "O ye who dwell in the hallowed tracts of the mountains, are ye willing that we should carry away Agave, the mother of Pentheus, from these Bacchic revels, and do a favour to the king?" His proposal appeared good to us; and we laid down in ambush among the brushwood of the thicket, concealing ourselves from observation. But, at the appointed hour, the Bacchæ raised the thyrsus, to begin the celebration of their rites, with one voice invoking Iacchus Bromius, the son of Jove; and all the mountain and the wild beasts joined the revel, there being no object that was not urged to the same wild career. Agave chanced to be leaping near me; and I sprang forth with the intention of seizing her, leaving the ambush where we had concealed our persons: but she loudly shouted, "O my fleet hounds, we are chased by these men; but follow me, follow, armed with the thyrsus in your hands." Upon this, we betook ourselves to flight, and escaped from being torn to pieces by the Bacchæ: but they, though unarmed with weapon of steel, rushed upon the herds as they browsed the herbage; and you might have seen one overpowering by the strength of her hands the lowing fattened heifer, while others, as they violently tore, rent asunder the steers: and you might have seen the ribs and cloven feet tossed here and there, or suspended from the pines, and dropping the blood with which they were bedabbled. Even the impetuous bulls, that were wont to menace fiercely with their horns, were laid with prostrate bodies on the ground, dragged down by the thousand hands of the youthful maids; and they rent the flesh from the limbs more quickly than you could close the lids on your royal eyes. They then rushed, like birds that rise through the air in flight, to the wide plains below¹, which, beside the streams of Asopus, yield the fertile harvests of the Thebans; and descending like enemies upon Hysia and Erythra, which

(1) "*Ἰπποδαμείας, camporum porrecta.* Idem autem *Ἰπποδαμείας* appellantur, quod camporum æquora ita sub monte Cithærone extendebantur."—HEATH.

are situated beneath the steep of Cithæron, they plundered and scattered every thing, and snatched even the children from the houses. But whatever they placed on their shoulders remained firm, though without any fastening, and fell not to the dark earth, not even brass nor iron; and amid their hair they carried fire, and felt not its flame. But the inhabitants who had been plundered by the Bacchæ rushed in anger to arms; when a strange spectacle, O king, ensued; for to the former, indeed, their pointed spears never drew blood, while the latter, discharging the thyrsus from their hands, wounded and, though women, put to flight the men, not without the assistance of some God. They then returned to the spot whence they had taken their way, to the very fountains which the God had bid arise for them; and they washed off the blood¹, while serpents with their tongues kept cleansing the clotted drops from their cheeks. Admit therefore to the city, O king, this Deity, whosoever he may be; since both in other things he is mighty: and this too they say of him, as I hear, that he bestowed on mortals the vine, which is the balm of every sorrow; for if the wine ceased to flow, Venus² would no longer smile, nor any other joy remain to man.

CHORUS.—I fear to express my free sentiments to a tyrant; yet still they shall be spoken: Bacchus hath been born inferior to none of all the Gods.

PEN.—Already this insolence of the Bacchæ kindles near us, like a fire, to the great disgrace of the Greeks. There is, therefore, no time for delay: haste to the Electran gates, and bid all who bear the shield, that mount the rapid steed, that wield the buckler, or twang with their hands the string of the bow, come forth and meet me, that we may lead our

(1) "Non hinc sanguinem Baccharum notat poeta, ut qui invulnerabiles illas agnoscit, sed laceratorum vitulorum et Bœotiorum nuper vulneratorum. Serpentes autem illarum genas trisulcis linguis lambebant, ut scires, nihil illis noxium."—BARNES.

(2) "Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus."

arms against the Bacchæ; for it exceeds endurance that we should submit to such grievances from women.

BACCHUS.—You have not been persuaded, O Pentheus, by any of the words which you heard from me: but yet, though I have suffered harsh treatment at your hands, I say that you ought not to take up arms against the God, but to remain in quiet. Bromius will not suffer you to drive his votaries from the mountains sacred to their rites.

PEN.—Will you not cease to admonish me, and, having escaped from chains, keep that circumstance in mind? or I shall again recall your punishment.

BACCHUS.—I would rather sacrifice to him, than, displaying the rage of a mortal against a God, kick against the pricks.

PEN.—I will sacrifice, working, without distinction, great slaughter of these women, as they deserve, in the vales of Cithæron.

BACCHUS.—Ye shall all be put to flight; and it were disgraceful that ye should turn your brazen shields before the thyrsus of the Bacchæ.

PEN.—We cannot get rid of this troublesome stranger, who, neither when suffering nor acting, will hold his tongue.

BACCHUS.—It is yet in your power, my friend, to arrange all these matters happily.

PEN.—By doing what? by submitting as a slave to my slaves?

BACCHUS.—Without arms, I will bring these women hither.

PEN.—Alas! he is now contriving some treachery against me.

BACCHUS.—What treachery, if I wish to save you by my arts?

PEN.—Ye have formed this compact in common, in order that ye might always continue your revels.

BACCHUS.—I have formed this compact, be assured, with the God.

PEN.—Bring hither my arms: and do you cease to speak.

BACCHUS.—But say, would you wish to see them seated together among the mountains?

PEN.—I wish it earnestly, and would give for this object vast sums of gold.

BACCHUS.—How have you fallen into such a strong desire of attaining it?

PEN.—I should have grief, if I saw them intoxicated with wine.

BACCHUS.—And would you desire to see, as a pleasure, that which would bring you pain?

PEN.—Be assured I should desire it, sitting quietly beneath the pines.

BACCHUS.—But they will trace you out, even though you should come secretly.

PEN.—Then let it be openly: for you have well suggested this.

BACCHUS.—Shall I then conduct you? and will you essay the journey?

PEN.—Conduct me as quickly as possible; but I do not grudge to let you command my time.

BACCHUS.—Now array your person in vestments of fine linen.

PEN.—But why is this? Shall I change to the state of women, and cease to be a man?

BACCHUS.—Lest they kill you, if you should there be perceived to be a man.

PEN.—You have well counselled this; and you are one who was always wise.

BACCHUS.—Bacchus instructed me in this wisdom.

PEN.—But how shall the device which you suggest be rightly put in practice?

BACCHUS.—I will equip you, going within the house.

PEN.—In what garb? a woman's? No; shame forbids me.

BACCHUS.—You no longer desire, then, to behold the Mænades.

PEN.—But in what fashion do you say that you would attire my person?

BACCHUS.—I should bid the flowing locks to stream loosely from your head.

PEN.—And what next are the ornaments that you devise for me?

BACCHUS.—Robes reaching to the ground; and a tiara shall crown your head.

PEN.—Is there any thing else that you would add to my apparel?

BACCHUS.—The thyrsus for your hand, and the dappled skin of the fawn.

PEN.—I could not bear to dress myself in this womanish attire¹.

BACCHUS.—But you will be the author of bloodshed, if you engage in battle with the Bacchæ.

PEN.—You are right: it were better first to go and view them as a spy.

BACCHUS.—It were at least more wise, than to pursue ills in addition to ills.

PEN.—And how shall I proceed through the city without attracting the notice of the Cadmeans?

BACCHUS.—We shall go by unfrequented paths; and I will shew you the way.

PEN.—Every thing is better than that the Bacchæ should mock me. Going within the house, we shall resolve on what may seem good.

BACCHUS.—It is in your power to do as you please; for all readiness on my part shall be accorded.

PEN.—I would now go; for I will either set forth arrayed in arms, or will be obedient to your counsels².

(1) "Cùm Plato apud Dionysium, Siciliæ tyrannum, convivio exciperetur, et allata esset stola purpurea, ut eam indueret, repudiâsse eam fertur, allatis his versibus:

Οὐκ ἂν δυναίμην θῆλον ἐνδύνααι στολήν,
"Ἀβήρην πεφυκώς καὶ γένους ἐξ ἄβρενος"

quos Euripidi tribuit Suidas, v. Ἀριστοππος. Sed alterum fortè ipse Plato addidit, aut ex aliâ tragœdiâ deprompsit."—HEATH.

(2) "Seusus est: Ateo: vel enim militibus cinctus in montem proficiscar, vel tuis consiliis de muliebri vestitu induendo obtemperabo."—MUSGRAVE.

BACCHUS.—The man, ye votaries, advances within the range of our toils; and shall come to the Bacchæ; where, dying, he shall suffer just punishment. O Bacchus, the work is now yours, for you are not far distant! let us take vengeance upon him. First deprive him of his senses, inspiring light delirium: for if his reason remained, he would not be willing to assume this female attire; but if he is hurried to distraction, he will consent to wear it. I am desirous that he should incur the laughter of the Thebans, being led in this likeness of a woman through the city, humbled from the former threats with which he was so haughty. But I go to attire Pentheus in the dress with which he shall descend to the Shades, slain by the hands of his mother; and he shall know Bacchus, the son of Jove, who hath been born most terrible in his office as a God, but yet most benignant to men¹.

CHORUS.—Shall I, then, ever awaking the Bacchic revel, advance my snowy foot in dances through the live-long night; and give my bosom to the dewy air, as the fawn, sporting in the verdant pleasures of the mead (when in freedom she hath escaped the fearful pursuit, bounding over the well-woven nets, as the hunter with cheering cry urges his rapid hounds to the toil and to a speed that outstrips the storm), bounds along the plain by the river, and through the branches of the shady forest, rejoicing in solitudes remote from men? What is a wiser or more glorious gift from the Gods to mortals, than to raise the hand in triumph above the head of an enemy? That which is honourable is ever dear to the soul. The power of the Gods is slow to exert its strength, but yet it never fails; and it calls to account those mortals that honour impiety, and refuse, in the madness of their thoughts, to exalt the glories of the Gods: who, through a long lapse of time, will lie

(1) The reading which Brunck suggests at this passage is unworthy of consideration; but there is some force in his ironical comment on the sense of the existing text: "Eximium benigni et clementis, quo se erga universum genus humanum animi esse jactat his verbis Bacchus, specimen in Cadmi filias et nepotem edit."

stealthily in ambush, and make, in the end, the wicked their prey. We ought, therefore, never to know or seek that which would transcend their laws; for it costs but little, to deem that the divine power, whatever is its nature, is possessed of might, and that that which hath ever from distant time been established by custom is the same with that which was produced by nature. What is a wiser or more glorious gift from the Gods to mortals, than to raise the hand in triumph above the head of an enemy? That which is honourable is ever dear to the soul. Blest of heaven is he who hath escaped the billows of the sea: and blest in like manner is he who hath risen superior to his toils. In different ways will different men surpass others in wealth and power: for a thousand hopes arise in a thousand breasts, of which some end in happiness to mortals, and others fade in disappointment. But him I would pronounce happy, whose life, from day to day, is blest with prosperity.

BACCHUS.—You, who are so desirous to see what is forbidden, who are so zealous where zeal is a folly—I mean Pentheus, come forth before your palace, and shew yourself to me, dressed in the garb of the Mænad maid, the votary of Bacchus, and prepared as a spy to observe your mother and her companions! But you resemble in figure one of the daughters of Cadmus.

PEN.—I seem to myself, in truth, to behold two suns, and a double vision of Thebes and the towers of her seven gates¹; and you appear to lead the way to me in the shape of a bull, and to have horns springing from your head. Are you, indeed, a wild beast? for you have certainly changed into the likeness of a bull.

BACCHUS.—The God accompanies us, being before not propitious, but now confederate with our designs. You now see what you ought to see.

(1) "Eumenidum veluti demens videt agmina Pentheus,
Et geminum solem, et duplices se ostendere Thebas."

Virg. Æn. IV. 469.

PEN.—What appearance do I shew? Is not my bearing like that of Ino, or of Agavè my mother?

BACCHUS.—I seem to behold them in their very persons, when I look upon you. But this ringlet hath strayed from its place, not as I arranged it beneath your tiara.

PEN.—Shaking it backwards and forwards, and imitating the Bacchic motions in the house, I have discomposed it from its place.

BACCHUS.—We, whose office it is to tend upon you, will again adjust it: but hold up your head.

PEN.—There, do you adorn me; for I give myself up to your care.

BACCHUS.—Your zone, too, is loose; and the folds of your robes do not depend in graceful order to the feet.

PEN.—They seem so to me, by the right foot; but, on the other side, my garment hangs elegantly over the ancle.

BACCHUS.—You will assuredly account me the first among your friends, when, contrary to your expectation, you see the Bacchæ virtuous.

PEN.—Whether taking the thyrsus in my right hand, or in the left, shall I more resemble a votary?

BACCHUS.—You ought to take it in your right hand, and, at the same time, to raise it with your right foot: but I commend you for having changed your sentiments.

PEN.—Shall I be able to bear on my shoulders the valleys of Cithæron along with the Bacchæ themselves?

BACCHUS.—You shall be able, if you will it. The thoughts which you before entertained were not wise; but now you have such as become you.

PEN.—Shall we take levers; or shall I uproot the mountain with my hands, placing my shoulders or arms beneath its heights?

(1) Pentheus, we are to suppose, is by this time mad; but there is still no propriety in making him talk such utter nonsense. The reply of Bacchus, which is intended for wit, is scarcely less lamentable. In fact, this whole scene is a disgrace to the beautiful drama in which it has unworthily found a place.

BACCHUS.—Do not seek to destroy the seats of the Nymphs, and the haunts of Pan, where he is wont to tune the pipe.

PEN.—You say well. We must not overcome women by strength; but I will conceal my body among the pines.

BACCHUS.—You shall hide in such a concealment as it is fitted you should find, when you go as the crafty spy of the Mænades.

PEN.—I think, in truth, that they in the thickets lie, like birds, in the dear nests of their beds.

BACCHUS.—Do you not go out for the very purpose that you may observe them? And you shall perhaps catch them, if you be not yourself first caught.

PEN.—Conduct me through the middle of the city of the Thebans; since I am the only man of them who has had courage for this enterprise.

BACCHUS.—You alone submit to toils in behalf of this city. Such trials, therefore, as may be expected, await you: but follow, for I am your safe guide. Another shall conduct you thence.

PEN.—Yes, my mother.

BACCHUS.—Conspicuous to the eyes of all.

PEN.—I go for this object.

BACCHUS.—You shall come carried back.

PEN.—You represent me as effeminate.

BACCHUS.—In the arms of your mother.

PEN.—And you will compel me to be luxurious.

BACCHUS.—Yes; and with such luxuries!

PEN.—I aim, indeed, at noble objects.

BACCHUS.—You are ruthless, ruthless; and you go to ruthless sufferings, so that you shall gain a renown firmly established in the heaven. Agave, and ye sister daughters of Cadmus, stretch forth your hands! I bring this youth to a desperate conflict; but I and Bromius shall prevail, and the event itself will shew the rest.

CHORUS.—Haste, ye fleet hounds of madness, haste to the mountains where the daughters of Cadmus are holding their revels! inspire them with fury against the infatuated

mortal who, in the borrowed garb of woman, comes as the spy of the Mænades. His mother, from some smooth rock or from some tree, shall first perceive him lurking in ambush; and shall exclaim to the Mænades, "Who is this of the Cadmeans, ye Bacchæ, that hath come to the mountain, that hath come to the mountain, as the spy of the votaries that haunt its glades? Who could have given him birth? For he hath not sprung from the race of woman, but owns his lineage from some lioness, or from the Lybian Gorgons." Let Vengeance come, with her terrors undisguised; let her come, armed with the sword, to pierce, with fatal wound through the throat, the impious, lawless, and unjust tyrant, the earth-born son of Echion; who, filled with thoughts of wrong, and stirred to lawless anger respecting the rites of Bacchus and of his mother, sets forth, in the madness of his mind and delirium of his spirit, as if he should conquer by force the invincible God. Inevitable death is the portion of those who violate the rites of the Gods; but for the mortal that hath a temperate mind, there is decreed a life without pain. I should not wish to pursue that wisdom which draws envy; but there are other great and distinguished virtues, which lead life to honourable objects, and to the observance of piety by night and day; while those laws which exclude the worship of the Gods are to be condemned as unjust¹.

(1) The passage in the original, from which the two last sentences are translated, is considered as hopelessly corrupt. The opinions of various editors and commentators are quoted by Elmsley in elucidation of its difficulties, but there is not one of them that is deserving of the slightest notice. We only profess to aim at what may have been the meaning of the author; and we need not be ashamed of any avowal of ignorance, when even the confident Brunck has been reduced to the following confession: "Hunc et novem sequentes versus, quos uncinis includi curavi, prætereat lector, nisi si quis in eorum emendatione ingenii vires experiri velit; sed id non antè adgrediatur, quàm Divæ Criticæ litaverit. In variis et discrepantibus doctorum virorum conjecturis nihil quod probabile, nedum certum sit, video: nec is ego sum qui Camarinam illam movere audeam." Elmsley has wisely followed this example of caution, and preserved his foot from the mud in which he exhibits the Heaths and Musgraves.

Let Vengeance come, with her terrors undisguised; let her come, armed with the sword, to pierce, with fatal wound through the throat, the impious, lawless, and unjust tyrant, the earth-born son of Echion. Appear, to the sight, as a bull, or as a serpent with many heads; or come to our view as a lion breathing flames. Come, O Bacchus, with smiling aspect, and cast thy toils around this hunter of the Bacchæ, who hath now fallen as a prey amid the deadly band of the Mænades!

MESSENGER.

O house, which wast once distinguished for prosperity through Greece—house of the aged Sidonian, who sowed in the ground the earth-born crop from the teeth of the dragon serpent—how I lament for your misfortunes, even though a slave! But the calamities of their masters are felt by faithful slaves.

CHORUS.—What has happened? What new intelligence do you bring from the Bacchæ?

MESS.—Pentheus is dead, the son of his father Echion.

CHORUS.—O Bromius our king, thou dost now appear a mighty God!

MESS.—What mean you? what have you said? Do you rejoice, O woman, at the evil fortunes of my master?

CHORUS.—I, a stranger, raise the glad acclaim in Barbaric strains; for I no longer tremble through fear of the fetters.

MESS.—Do you account Thebes void of spirit to resent the insult?

CHORUS.—It is Bacchus, Bacchus, and not Thebes, that possesses power over me.

MESS.—It is pardonable in your circumstances; but it is not good, O woman, to rejoice in the evils that have been perpetrated.

CHORUS.—Tell, and describe to me, by what fate the unjust man, and the worker of injustice, perished.

MESS.—After we had left Therapnæ in this Theban territory¹, we passed the streams of Asopus, and began to

(1) There were other towns of the name of Therapnæ in different parts of Greece; but the Messenger is a little more precise than is neces-

sary,

ascend the steeps of Cithæron—Pentheus and I (for I followed my master), and the stranger who was the guide to our journey of discovery. First, then, we took our station in a grassy grove, making no sound with our steps or with our voices, that, unseen, we might see. But there was a deep valley surrounded with precipices, watered by rivulets and overshadowed with pines, where the Mænades sat, having their hands employed in pleasing labours: for some of them wreathed the faded thyrsus till it bloomed anew with ivy; and others, breaking, like wild colts, from their various tasks, raised, in response to each other, the Bacchic melody. But the unhappy Pentheus, not being able to see the female band, thus spoke: "O stranger, where we now stand, I cannot discern all the lewd motions of the Mænades; but by ascending a mound or lofty pine, I could better observe their shameful proceedings." Hereupon I witnessed a marvellous exploit of the stranger; for seizing the topmost boughs of a pine which rose to heaven, he bent, yes bent, and bent¹ them to the dark earth: but the tree was curved as a bow, or as a crooked wheel, (which, described by the circle, assumes an orbed circumference,) when the stranger, grasping its mountain branches with his hands, bent them to the earth, achieving no mortal feat. Then, having seated Pentheus amid the branches of the pine, he let the tree arise slowly through his hands to its upright state, taking care lest it might shake him off; and the tree rose firmly aloft in the air, having my master seated on its summit. But he was seen by the Mænades more than he saw them; for he was all but already detected in his lofty seat. And now the stranger was no longer to be seen; but a voice from the air (if one may conjecture, the voice of Bacchus) exclaimed,

sary, in mentioning that the Therapnæ, of which he speaks, was in the Theban territory; as no one could have easily connected his narrative with Sparta or Thessaly.

(1) The repetition of the word is employed to denote the gradual motion with which the pine is brought to the ground.

"O ye youthful maids, I have brought the man who held in derision you and me and my rites: but be it yours to punish him." At the same time that he spoke these words, he displayed between earth and heaven a strong blaze of sacred flame; and all the air was still; through the grassy grove not a leaf was stirred; nor was the cry of wild beasts heard. But the Bacchæ, not having distinctly heard the voice, started up, and rolled their eyes around: but the God again repeated his commands; and the daughters of Cadmus, when they clearly knew that it was the bidding of Bacchus, rushed away, displaying in their rapid career a speed of foot that rivalled the flight of the dove—Agave the mother of Pentheus, and her sisters of the same lineage, and all the Bacchæ; and they bounded over the torrents and ravines of the grove, inspired with madness by the God. But when they saw my master seated on the pine, they first cast stones at him with violent force, ascending a rock that rose over against him; and he was¹ darted at with branches of pine. Others hurled the thyrsus through the air at the unlucky seat of Pentheus: but their efforts did not avail; for the wretched man, though reduced to helpless state, sat at a height which baffled their fury. Next, rending like thunder the arms of oak, they tore them from their roots with levers not formed of iron. But when they still could not effect the end of their toils, Agave spoke: "Come, ye Mænades, and, standing round in a circle, apply your strength to the stem of the tree, that we may be able to take the wild beast that hath ascended it, and that he may be prevented from carrying away any tidings of the secret choirs of the God!" Then did the Bacchæ grasp, with a thousand hands, the pine, and tore it up from the earth; and Pentheus, who was sitting aloft, falls from aloft, prostrate on the ground, with many a shriek; for he perceived that he was near calamity. And first his mother, as the Priestess, began the rites of slaughter, and rushed

(1) Some commentators would have it: "And he darted back at them with the branches of the pine." The description is already sufficiently absurd, without this addition.

on him: but he cast the tiara from his hair, in order that the wretched Agave might recognise him and spare his life; and he said, touching her cheek, "O mother, I am thy son, Pentheus, to whom thou gavest birth in the house of Echion. Pity me, O my mother, and do not on account of my errors slay thy son!" But she, foaming at the mouth and rolling her distorted eyes, and not conceiving such thoughts as she ought, was possessed by Bacchus, and the words of her son did not move her: for, grasping with her hands his left arm, and planting her foot in the side of the unhappy victim, she tore off the arm, not by her natural strength, but because the God made the deed easy to her hands. But Ino, on the other side, performed her share of the work, rending the flesh; and Autonoe, and all the crowd of Bacchæ, pressed upon him; and all sorts of cries arose at the same time; he, indeed, groaning as long as he breathed, while they awoke the shouts of triumph. Here one bore away an arm, and there another a foot with the sandal on; and the ribs were laid bare by their rendings; and each, with her hands steeped in blood, scattered the mangled flesh of Pentheus². But the body lies in various quarters, part beneath the rugged rocks, and part in the deep thickets of the wood, not easily to be discovered: and his mother, having fixed on the top of her thyrsus his wretched head, which she chanced to have seized in her hands, bears it, as the spoils of some mountain lion, down the slopes of Cithæron, having left her sisters with the choirs of the Mænades. And she comes within these walls, exulting in her ill-fated booty, and invoking Bacchus as her partner in the chace, as the ally who aided her to the

(1) "Hunc locum Christiano homini non commendare nequeo, quia Orationi Dominicæ valdè accommodus est, unâ tantùm voculâ mutata: Οἴκτειρε δ', ὦ πάτερ, μέ' μηδὲ ταῖς ἐμαῖς Ἀμαρτίαις παῖδα σὸν κατακτάω." —BARNES.

(2) This description of the death of Pentheus is revolting in the extreme. The story of his having been torn to pieces could not of course have been changed; but the good taste of the poet ought to have made him spare the minute details of such a horrid transaction.

glorious triumph of this prey, for which she shall only gain tears as a reward. I therefore depart from this scene of calamity, before Agave comes to the house. But temperance of thought, and reverence for the rites of the Gods, I conceive to be the wisest and most glorious blessings to the mortals who adopt them in their lives.

CHORUS.—Let us awake our choral hymn to Bacchus; and let us celebrate the calamity of Pentheus, the offspring of the dragon, who assumed the female garb and the wand of the beauteous thyrsus, the certain pledge of his destruction, having a bull as the guide to his fate. O, ye Cadmean Bacchæ, ye changed his proud notes of triumph to lamentation and tears! It was a glorious fortitude to dip the reeking hand in the blood of a child. But cease the strain; for I see Agave, the mother of Pentheus, approaching the house with wildly-rolling eyes; and welcome the associate of the Bacchic God.

AGAVE.

Ye Bacchæ of Asia!

CHORUS.—Why do you loudly call on me?

AGAVE.—We bring from the mountains to this palace a new-slain whelp, a glorious prey.

CHORUS.—I see it; and I will admit you as an associate of our band.

AGAVE.—I caught without toils this young lion, as you may see.

CHORUS.—In what desert scene?

AGAVE.—Cithæron—

CHORUS.—What of Cithæron?

AGAVE.—Slew him.

CHORUS.—Who was the first that struck him?

AGAVE.—That honour was mine.

CHORUS.—Happy Agave!

AGAVE.—We are celebrated amid the bands of the votaries.

CHORUS.—Who assisted you?

AGAVE.—Of Cadmus—

CHORUS.—What of Cadmus?

AGAVE.—The children, the children of Cadmus, after me assailed this monster.

CHORUS.—You are happy in this prey.

AGAVE.—Now partake of the banquet.

CHORUS.—What should I, wretched as I am, partake?

AGAVE.—This young whelp has just begun to disclose, beneath the soft locks of the head, the bristling hairs of the beard.

CHORUS.—His hair shews like that of a beast that roams the wild.

AGAVE.—Bacchus, the skilful hunter, skilfully roused the Mænades against this animal.

CHORUS.—Our king is famed for the chase.

AGAVE.—Do you praise?

CHORUS.—What should I praise?

AGAVE.—Soon shall the Cadmeans and my son Pentheus praise his mother, who in a marvellous manner hath taken this marvellous prey of the lion's young.

CHORUS.—Do you exult?

AGAVE.—I rejoice in having achieved so great, so great and illustrious a deed.

CHORUS.—Shew now to the citizens, O wretched woman! the spoils of victory which you have brought with you.

AGAVE.—O ye who dwell within the beauteous towers of the city of the Theban land! approach, that ye may behold this prey of the wild beast, which we daughters of Cadmus have taken, not with the barbed arrow of the Thessalians, nor with nets, but with our hands and white arms. May we not then boast? and is there need that the weapons of those who forge the spear should any longer be idly carried by the hunter? With this hand we took this prey, and scattered abroad the limbs of the monster. Where is my aged father? let him approach. Where is my son Pentheus? let him take and raise against the house the well-compacted scaling ladder, that he may affix to the sculptured pillar this head of the lion, which I have brought from the chase.

CADMUS.—Follow me, ye attendants; and bring before the house the wretched burden of Pentheus, whose body I here bear, having discovered it, after long and toilsome search in the valleys of Cithæron, torn to pieces; and finding no parts of it in the same place, but all scattered through the entangled thicket. For I heard of the atrocities of my daughters, when I had come within the walls of the city with the aged Tiresias, on our return from the Bacchæ; and retracing my steps to the mountain, I carried off my son, who had been slain by the Mænades. And I saw, indeed, Autonoë, who formerly bore Actæon to Aristæus, and Ino along with her, still roaming through the forest, under the impulse of wretched madness: but some one told me that Agave was coming hither with Bacchanalian step; nor have we heard what is groundless; for I behold her approach, an ill-omened vision.

AGAVE.—O father, you may proudly boast that you have begotten by far the noblest daughters of all mortals. I speak this praise of all; but chiefly of myself, who, leaving the shuttle and the loom, have advanced to a higher aim, to capture the wild beasts with my hands. And I bring in my arms, as you see, these glorious spoils which I have taken, that they may be suspended on the walls of your palace. But do you, father, receive them in your hands; and, exulting in the trophies of my chase, invite your friends to the banquet; for you are happy, happy in these our exploits.

CADMUS.—O immeasurable sorrow, and deed that may not be looked upon, of those that have committed murder with wretched hands! Having slain a goodly victim to the Gods, you invite Thebes and me to the banquet. Woe is me! in the first place for your evils, and then for my own; since the God who sprung from this race (the royal Bacchus) hath, justly indeed, yet too severely, destroyed us.

AGAVE.—How morose is old age by nature to men! and how gloomy its look! May my son be successful in the chase, imitating his mother's manners, when among the youths of Thebes he pursues with them the prey! But he

is only inclined to fight against the Gods. He must be admonished, father, by you and by me, not to take pleasure in such pernicious sophistries. Where is he? Who will summon him hither to my sight, that he may behold my happiness?

CADMUS.—Alas, alas! when you understand what you have done, you will be pained with grievous sorrow: but if you remain to the end in the same state in which you now are, though not happy, you will not seem to yourselves to be wretched.

AGAVE.—What, in these events, is not glorious? or what should be the cause of pain?

CADMUS.—First cast your eyes on this expanse of air.

AGAVE.—I do. Why have you bid me observe it?

CADMUS.—Is it still the same; or does it appear to you to have undergone a change?

AGAVE.—It seems brighter, and more transparent than before.

CADMUS.—Does the same excitement still flutter your soul?

AGAVE.—I do not understand your words; but I feel myself, I know not how, returning to my senses, and changing from my former thoughts.

CADMUS.—Are you willing, then, to hear my words, and to answer clearly?

AGAVE.—I have forgot, O father, what we talked of before.

CADMUS.—Into what house did you wed with the rites of Hymen?

AGAVE.—You gave me to Echion, who sprung, as they say, from the teeth of the dragon.

CADMUS.—What son in that house was born to your husband?

AGAVE.—Pentheus, the fruit of my intercourse with his father.

CADMUS.—Whose is that head which you bear in your arms?

AGAVE.—A lion's; as they, who took it, said.

CADMUS.—Examine it now strictly: it is a slight trouble to bestow this attention.

AGAVE.—Ha! what do I behold? what is this that I bear in my hands?

CADMUS.—Contemplate it, and inform yourself more clearly.

AGAVE.—I see it, to my sorrow, the greatest of griefs!

CADMUS.—Does it appear to you to resemble a lion?

AGAVE.—No: but I, his unhappy mother, hold the head of Pentheus—

CADMUS.—Made the subject of lamentation before you recognised him.

AGAVE.—Who slew him? how did he come into my hands?

CADMUS.—O sad truth! at what an unseasonable moment art thou come!

AGAVE.—Speak; for my heart beats violently, with fear of what is next.

CADMUS.—You and your sisters slew him.

AGAVE.—Where did he perish? in the house? or in what place?

CADMUS.—Where, formerly, his hounds tore Actæon.

AGAVE.—Why did this ill-fated youth go to Cithæron?

CADMUS.—He went to revile the Gods, and your Bacchic rites.

AGAVE.—In what way did it happen that we were urged to the mountain?

CADMUS.—Ye were mad; and all the city was carried away by the phrensy of Bacchus.

AGAVE.—I at length comprehend that Bacchus hath undone us.

CADMUS.—Having been provoked by your insolence: for you did not account him a God.

AGAVE.—But where, O father, is the dearest body of my son?

CADMUS.—After having discovered it with difficulty, I have brought it hither.

AGAVE.—Are all the parts of the limbs well re-united? What a share of my folly hath fallen upon Pentheus!

CADMUS.—He was like you, and denied worship to the God. He has, therefore, involved all in a common ruin, both you and himself; so as to destroy the house, and me, who, being childless of male offspring¹, see, O unhappy woman, this branch that sprung from your womb laid low by a most shameful and ignominious death. To you, O my son, offspring of my daughter, the house looked up; and you supported my palace, and were a dread to the city. No one, when he looked on you, was inclined to insult the old man; for he would have met with deserved punishment. But now shall I soon be driven forth with dishonour from the house—I, Cadmus the mighty, who sowed the race of the Thebans, and reaped that glorious harvest. O dearest of men! for though you no longer live, you shall be numbered among the dearest of my children: no more touching this beard with your hand, and addressing the father of your mother, shall you embrace him, my son, with these words: "Who, old man, injures you? who does you dishonour? Who vexes your heart, or annoys you? Speak, O father, that I may punish him that wrongs you." But now, indeed, I am unhappy, and you are wretched, and your mother is in affliction, and her sisters share the sorrow. If there be any one who despises the Gods, let him, after having regarded the death of Pentheus, own their divine power.

(1) "Here Euripides, representing the aged Cadmus without male issue, violates the received tradition of ancient history, and even contradicts his own express authority in the *Phœnissæ*; where he declares that Cadmus, by his wife Harmonia, had a son, whose name was Polydorus. And we learn from Diodorus Siculus, that Polydorus, son of Cadmus, returned to the kingdom of Thebes after the expulsion of his father, and that his descendants there reigned in succession. Pausanias likewise mentions this Polydorus as son of Cadmus; and informs us, that he enjoyed the sovereignty of Thebes, after the migration of Cadmus to the Illyrians and Encheleans. We have also the concurring testimony of Apollodorus in support of this son of Cadmus, Polydorus, as king of Thebes."—JODRELL.

CHORUS.—I grieve, indeed, O Cadmus, for your sufferings; but the son of your daughter has met with the punishment which he merited, although it may be the cause of pain to you.

AGAVE.—O father, you see how my state is changed.

BACCHUS.—You shall be transformed into a dragon; and your wife Harmonia, the daughter of Mars, whom you, though a mortal, wedded, shall, changing her human nature, assume the form of a serpent; and you shall drive along with your wife a chariot drawn by oxen, as the oracle of Jove declares, and lead the Barbarians. You shall destroy many cities with your countless legions: but when they shall plunder the shrine of Apollo, they shall meet, on their return, with mishap. But Mars shall deliver you and Harmonia, and shall establish your life in the land of the blessed. I, Bacchus, who sprung from no mortal father, but from Jove, announce to you these fortunes. If ye had learned to be wise, when ye would not, ye might now have been happy, and have preserved the son of Jove as your ally.

AGAVE.—Bacchus, we supplicate thy mercy! we confess that we wronged thee.

BACCHUS.—Ye have acknowledged my power too late: for when it was fitting, ye would not know me.

AGAVE.—We own our errors; but thou art too severe in the punishment.

BACCHUS.—For I, though born a God, was insulted by you.

AGAVE.—The Gods, in their resentments, ought not to resemble mortals.

BACCHUS.—My father Jove long since ratified these decrees.

AGAVE.—Alas! alas! a wretched exile, old man, is decreed for us.

BACCHUS.—Why then delay, when no relief can be obtained?

CADMUS.—O my daughter, to what dreadful evils we

have come! both you being involved in the affliction and your dear sisters; whilst I, an unhappy man, must depart to the Barbarians, changing, in my old age, my country: and it is yet fated for me to conduct against Greece a mingled army of Barbarians. Leading their spears in the form of a dragon, I shall bring against the altars and tombs of Greece the daughter of Mars, my wife Harmonia, who shall also bear the savage shape of the serpent: nor shall I, a wretched mortal, be released from my sufferings, nor, by sailing down the streams of Acheron, attain to rest.

AGAVE.—And I, O father, bereft of you, must depart to exile.

CADMUS.—Why do you clasp me in your arms, my unhappy child, as the white bird, the swan, its aged parent?

AGAVE.—Where can I betake myself, when driven from my country?

CADMUS.—I know not, my child: your father is of feeble aid.

AGAVE.—Farewell, O palace; and farewell my native city: I leave thee to my sorrow, an exile from thy chambers.

CADMUS.—Go now, my child, to the abode of Aristæus.

AGAVE.—I groan for you, my father.

CADMUS.—And I for you, my child: and I bewail the fate of your sisters.

AGAVE.—The royal Bacchus hath terribly, terribly visited with punishment your house.

BACCHUS.—For I suffered great wrongs from you, having no honours paid to my name in Thebes.

AGAVE.—Farewell, my father.

CADMUS.—Farewell, my wretched daughter: but you will not easily attain to this wish.

AGAVE.—Conduct me, ye attendants, where I may be able to take my wretched sisters as the partners of my flight: and may I go to a country where the polluted Cithæron shall no longer behold me, nor I look on Cithæron,

nor where any memorial of the thyrsus is preserved! Let such be a care to other Bacchæ.

CHORUS.—There are various forms of the dispensations of heaven; and the Gods consummate many things beyond our hopes: and that which was expected hath not come to pass, while the God hath found means to effect that which was not expected. Such, in this case, hath been the issue.

THE HERACLIDÆ.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

IOLAUS.
COPREUS.
CHORUS.
DEMOPHON.
MACARIA.
SERVANT.
ALCMENA.
MESSENGER.
EURYSTHEUS.

THE HERACLIDÆ.

IOLAUS.

It has long been a settled opinion in my mind, that the just man is born for the good of his neighbours; but that he that hath a spirit devoted to gain, is useless to the State, disagreeable in the intercourse of life, and only of advantage to himself. I have learned this doctrine not merely by words; for being moved by a sense of honour and pious regard for kindred¹, when it was in my power to have lived in quiet at Argos, I participated more than any one man in the labours of Hercules, whilst he remained with us: and now, when he dwells in heaven, having his children beneath my wings, I protect them, though I myself require protection. For when their father was removed from earth, Eurystheus indeed, in the first instance, wished to put us to death; but we escaped, and, though our country was lost, our lives were saved. But we wander in exile, passing from the boundaries of one State to another: for Eurystheus, in addition to former ills, has thought fit to work this insolent wrong to us: sending heralds to whatever country he may know we inhabit, he demands us back, and drives us forth from the land; holding out, to our friends, Argos as no trifling city of which to make an enemy, and reminding them at the same time of his own prosperous fortunes: and they, seeing that my resources are weak, and that these children are young, and deprived of their father, pay court to those of superior power, and exclude us from their country. But I have joined the flight of these exiled children, and I share the misfortunes of their evil lot, dis-

(1) Iolaus was the son of Iphicles, the brother of Hercules.

daing to betray them, lest some one of mortals should thus say: "Behold, when to the children their father is no more, Iolaus, though by birth their kinsman, fails to protect them!" Having now been banished from every realm in Greece, we have come to Marathon, and the country that obeys the same rule, and have taken our seat at the altars of the Gods, imploring their aid: for it is reported that the two sons¹ of Theseus dwell in the plains of this land, having obtained their possessions by lot², the descendants of Pandion, and the kinsmen³ of these children. On this account we have undertaken the present journey to the boundaries of illustrious Athens; and the flight of the exiles is conducted by two aged guides⁴. I, indeed, am anxiously occupied about these boys; and Alcmena, clasping in her arms the female children, protects them within the temple; for we are ashamed to let youthful virgins approach the crowd, or stand by the altar. But Hyllus and his brothers, who are of riper years, are inquiring in what country we can occupy a place of refuge, if we be driven by force from this land. My children, my children, come hither, and cling to my garments! for I see approaching towards us that Herald of Eurystheus, by whom we are persecuted and forced to wander in exile from every land. O hateful miscreant! may you perish, and he that sent you! for from that same mouth you have announced many evils to the noble father of these children.

(1) Demophon and Acamas. According to Pausanias, Theseus was still king at the time when the Heraclidæ came to Athens.

(2) "Videntur de integro Atticæ regno sortes duxisse, non, partitione factâ, de partibus. Quærenti enim Copreo, quis terræ rex esset, v. 115. Chorus in responsione, Acamante omisso, Demophontem unum nominat."—MUSGRAVE.

(3) See line 208, where the connection is explained.

(4) Iolaus and Alcmena. Elmsley remarks, that Alcmena was the grandmother of Iolaus; and that it is therefore inconsistent, that, if the former were alive, the latter should appear on the stage as a very old man: but the learned commentator seems to have forgotten that, according to some authorities, Iphicles was the son of Automedusa, daughter of Alcæthous, and that it is most probable that Euripides followed this account of the genealogy of Iolaus.

COPREUS.

I suppose that you consider that you have sat down here in goodly security, and that you have come to a city that will assist you, erring in your judgment: for there is no one who will prefer your feeble power to Eurystheus. Come, (why should you take this trouble? you must needs arise,) and depart to Argos, where the punishment of stoning awaits you.

IOLAUS.—No, in truth: for this altar of the God, and the free land to which we have come, will suffice to protect me.

COPR.—Do you wish to cause trouble to this hand of mine?

IOLAUS.—Surely you will not take away me, or these children, by force.

COPR.—You shall soon know: but you were not a good prophet in that conjecture.

IOLAUS.—The deed may never be done, while I am alive.

COPR.—Away: for I will carry these children off, even though you should be unwilling; and conduct them to Eurystheus, whose slaves they are.

IOLAUS.—O ye, who from early time¹ have dwelt in Athens, lend your aid! for we, though the suppliants of Jove, the guardian of the Forum, are assailed with violence, and our chaplets are polluted; a disgrace to the city, and a dishonour to the Gods.

CHORUS.

Ho! ho! What clamour arises beside the altar? What calamity will it quickly shew?

IOLAUS.—Behold an infirm old man prostrated² on the ground, wretched man that I am!

CHORUS.—By whom have you been dashed, with this hapless fall, to earth?

IOLAUS.—This man, O strangers, dishonouring your Gods, drags me by force from before the altar of Jove.

CHORUS.—From what land, old man, have you come to

(1) "Atheniensis *Ἀνδροχόνας* notat, eoque nomine iis gratissimo ad auxilium suum magis illos excitandos putat."—BARNES.

(2) Literally, *spilt*.

the confederate tribes of our four cities¹? or from afar have you come in a ship over the sea, leaving the shores of Eubœa²?

IOLAUS.—I do not lead, O strangers, the life of an islander; but I have come to your land from Mycenæ.

CHORUS.—By what name, old man, do the people of Mycenæ call you?

IOLAUS.—You have heard, perchance, of Iolaus, the companion in arms of Hercules: for my name is not unknown to fame.

CHORUS.—I know it, having before heard of it: but tell me, whose are the young children whom you conduct with your hand?

IOLAUS.—These, O strangers, are the children of Hercules, who have come as suppliants to you and to the city.

CHORUS.—On what account? or, tell me, do they seek to obtain an audience of the State³?

IOLAUS.—They pray, neither to be given up, nor dragged by force from the altars of your Gods, to return to Argos.

COPR.—But this will not satisfy your masters, who, having a right to you, find you here.

CHORUS.—It is proper, O stranger, that the suppliants of the Gods should be respected, and that you should not be forced by the hand of violence to abandon the seats of the Divine Powers; for sacred Justice will not suffer the outrage.

COPR.—Dismiss now from this land the slaves of Eurystheus, and I shall not use any violence of hand.

CHORUS.—It is impious for the city to slight the suppliant appeal of strangers.

(1) The Tetrapolis of Attica consisted of the towns of Cœnoë, Marathon, Probalinthus, and Tricorythus, which were founded by Xuthus, after his marriage with a daughter of Eretheus. They were spared by the Lacedæmonians in the invasions of Attica, on account of their ancient kindness to the children of Hercules.

(2) "Eubœam reliquisse eos conjicit, utpote Marathoni vicinam."

(3) "Sensus est, Nisi causam adventûs tui potius civitatis magistratibus quàm nobis aperiendam censes."—ELMSLEY.

COPR.—But it is well to keep the foot out of trouble, and to seek wise and better counsel.

CHORUS.—Ought you not, after having explained your purpose to the king of this country, to have attempted your design, (but not by force to have dragged strangers from the altars of the Gods,) shewing reverence to a land of freedom?

COPR.—Who is the king of this land and city?

CHORUS.—Demophon, the son of Theseus, a renowned father.

COPR.—The discussion of this question would most properly be held with him; for these previous words have been spoken in vain.

CHORUS.—And, in truth, here he comes himself, in haste, with Acamas his brother, to hear this cause.

DEMOPHON.

Since you, though an old man, have outstripped our youth in running on the alarm to this altar of Jove, tell me what chance has collected this crowd?

CHORUS.—These, O king, are the children of Hercules, who sit as suppliants, having laid, as you see, their garlands on the altar; and Iolaus, the faithful companion in arms of their father.

DEM.—How did this occasion require these shrieks?

CHORUS.—This man, in attempting to drag them away by violence from the altar, gave rise to the clamour, and dashed the old man to the ground; so that I shed the tear through pity.

DEM.—He bears, in truth, the shape and fashion of the Grecian garb; but the deeds of his hand are Barbarian. It is now your part to tell me, and without delay, of what country, having left the boundaries, you have come hither.

COPR.—I am an Argive, for this you wish to know; and for what purpose I come, and from whom, I am willing to tell. Eurystheus, the king of Mycenæ, hath sent me hither, to conduct back these fugitives; and I have come,

(1) "*Hoc enim unum erat, quod interrogasti. At ipse cur veniam, et à quo, etiam non interrogatus, dicam.*"—MUSGRAVE.

O stranger, having at the same time many pleas of justice either for action or argument. For I, being myself an Argive, bear away Argives, seizing these as runaways from my own country and condemned by the laws there to die: and we, in the administration of an independent State, are surely entitled of ourselves and against ourselves to decree judgments without appeal. But though they have come to the altars of many others, we have rested our claim on the same arguments; and none have dared, in their defence, to bring ruin on themselves. But they have come hither, either having perceived some folly in you, or willing in their desperate circumstances to set their hazard on a die, whether your aid should be granted or not. They could not expect that you, if in your senses, would alone, of the many States of Greece to which they have gone, have compassion upon their irremediable calamities: for consider and weigh, if you admit them to your country, or suffer us to lead them away, what will be the balance of gain. As to the advantages from us, you may derive such as to attach the great forces of the Argives, and all the strength of Eurystheus, to this city. But if, regarding their words and piteous complaints, you be softened in their favour, the matter comes to the decision of the spear; for do not think that we shall resign this contest without an appeal to the weapons of Chalybia¹. What then will you say? Of what plains deprived will you wage war against the Argives of the Tirynthian land²? in aid of what allies, and in defence of what cause, will you bury the dead that fall? You will assuredly be the subject of evil reproach to the citizens, if, on account of an old man (who is a mere sepulchre, who is even, so to say, a nothing), and in defence of these children, you should plunge your foot in the mire. You will confess, at best, that you can only find hope: and this is far from

(1) "Cum Χαλυβιδῶν, quod adjectivum est, subaudiendum σιδήρου, in quâ ellipsi videtur mihi aliquid comicæ dicacitatis esse, ut cùm in comœdiis vernaculis *Toletanus* de ense usurpatur."—MUSGRAVE.

(2) "Ad agri Tirynthii mentionem illustrandam satis erit monere, Herculem et Eurystheum promiscuè Tirynthios et Argivos à Tragicis appellari."—ELMSLEY.

being sufficient, in the present emergency. For these, though they attained the vigour of youth, would fight but hopelessly in arms against the Argives (if this thought gives confidence to your soul); and there must first elapse a long period, in which ye might be destroyed. Be persuaded, then, by me: grant nothing; but, permitting me to bear away what is my own, secure the alliance of Mycenæ: and do not, as ye are wont, be subject to this error, that when it is in your power to choose better friends, ye should prefer the worse.

DEM.—Who can decide a cause, or appreciate a question, before he shall fully learn its clear statement from both sides?

IOLAUS.—O king, there exists to me this privilege in your country, that I may speak and hear in my turn; and no one shall drive me away before I enjoy it, as they did from other cities. To us and this man there is nothing in common: for since we have no longer any portion in Argos after the vote that was decreed, but are exiles from our country, how can he with justice reclaim us, whom they banished from the land, as subjects of Mycenæ¹? We now are strangers. Or do ye think it right that he who is exiled from Argos must be exiled from the limits of Greece? Surely not from Athens: for she will never, through fear of the Argives, bid the children of Hercules depart from her soil. For this is not Trachis², nor a petty city of Achaia, whence you, not with justice, but by boasting of Argos in the terms which you have now used, drove forth these suppliants who were seated at their altars. If this should here be the case, and the people should approve your words, I could no longer deem that this city of Athens was free. But I know the spirit and nature of its people: they would rather die; for honour is considered

(1) Mycenæ and Argos are confounded even by Æschylus, in whose time Mycenæ was still a city.

(2) When the Heraclidæ sought refuge at Trachis, Ceyx, who had been a friend of their father, was king; but the threats of Eurystheus had more power than the claims of the persecuted race, and Ceyx, refusing to protect them, sent them on to Athens.

by good men as better than life. With respect to the city, I have spoken enough; for it is invidious to commend too highly; and I have often, in my own case, felt oppressed when praised beyond desert. But I wish to explain how there is a strong claim on you, as king of this land, to protect these suppliants. Pittheus was the son of Pelops; and from Pittheus sprung Æthra, from whom your father Theseus derived his birth. I will next trace upwards to you the lineage of these children. Hercules was the son of Jove and Alcmena, and she was the offspring of a daughter¹ of Pelops; so that your father and their father were cousins; and you are thus, O Demophon, connected with them by blood. But I will now tell you how you are bound, exclusive of the ties of kindred, to assist the children; for I say, that when I bore the shield of their father, I formerly sailed along with Theseus in quest of the belt² which was the cause of so much slaughter: and Hercules also brought back your father to light from the gloomy depths of Hades, a deed to which all Greece bears witness. In return for these services, they claim from you, as a favour, that they be neither given up, nor, torn by force from the altars of your Gods, be removed from the land. For it were both disgraceful to you in itself, and an evil to the city, that suppliants, exiles, kindred (alas for their wretched state! behold, behold them!) should be dragged away with violence. But I entreat you, and place my suppliant wreaths in your hands, and implore you by your beard, that you will not disdain to receive under your care the children of Hercules! O prove to them a kinsman; and prove a friend, a father, a

(1) Lisydice.

(2) Admeta, the daughter of Eurystheus, took a fancy for a famous belt of gold which belonged to Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons; and Hercules, having been sent in quest of it, obtained it by the ungallant process of killing its owner. Theseus accompanied him in the expedition; and received, in reward of his services, Antiope, the daughter of Hippolyta. Even thus the balance of obligation seems to have been on the opposite side: but the next favour to which Iolaus refers, was, without question, beyond the common pitch of friendship.

brother, a master! for all these relations were better, than to fall into the power of the Argives.

CHORUS.—I felt pity, O king, as I listened to their misfortunes: and now have I truly seen how nobility is conquered by fortune; for they, though the children of an illustrious father, have met with unmerited calamities.

DEM.—Three views of their circumstances¹ constrain me, O Iolaus, not to reject these strangers. The highest cause is Jove, at whose altar you are seated, having around you this youthful group². There is next the claim of kindred, and the obligation which rests on me that they should receive benefits at my hands for the sake of their father: and, lastly, there is the sense of honour, which we ought ever chiefly to regard. For if I shall suffer this altar to be despoiled with violence by a stranger, I shall not appear to dwell in a free land; and I shrink from the idea of delivering up suppliants to the Argives. Such a necessity were little better than hanging. I sincerely wish that you had come in more prosperous circumstances; but yet do not now be afraid that any one shall drag you and the children by force from this altar. But do you, going to Argos, both relate what I have said to Eurystheus; and add, that if he has any charge against these strangers, he shall meet with justice; but you shall never force them away.

COPR.—Not if it be both just, and I shall prevail in the argument?

DEM.—How can it be just to drag away a suppliant by force?

COPR.—Is not this, then, disgraceful to me, and not injurious to you?

(1) "*συμφορὰς ὁδοί, viae, sive modi, quibus casus hic spectari potest.*"—MUSGRAVE.

(2) "De pueris, *νεοσσῶν*, nomine insignitis vid. quæ nos ad Troad. v. 753. *παιήρυριν* autem vocat ob numerum Heraclidarum; erant enim ex Thestii filiabus tantum ultra sexaginta; præter Hyllum ex Deianirâ, Agelaum ex Omphale, aliosque ferè tredecim, quorum nomina habes in Apollodori Bibliothecâ, lib. ii. c. 7. sec. 8."—BARNES.

DEM.—It would be injurious to me, if I should give them up for you to carry away.

COPR.—But do you banish them from your territories, and we shall bear them off from the country to which they go.

DEM.—You are by nature a fool, who deem yourself wiser than the God.

COPR.—This is to be a place of refuge, it would appear, to the bad.

DEM.—The altar of the Gods affords a common protection to all.

COPR.—It will not appear in the same light, perhaps, to the people of Mycenæ.

DEM.—Am not I the sovereign of this realm?

COPR.—You will do no injury to your neighbours, if you are wise.

DEM.—Be injured, provided I be not guilty of pollution towards the Gods.

COPR.—I would not have you engage in war with the Argives.

DEM.—I have the same wish; but I will not give up these suppliants.

COPR.—I shall drag away, however, those whom I have seized as belonging to me.

DEM.—You shall not, then, with ease again return to Argos¹.

COPR.—I shall soon know, by making trial, if this be the case.

(1) "The Athenians are said, by Philostratus, to have instituted a public and solemn mourning in commemoration of the crime they had committed in killing the Herald Copreus, as he was forcibly dragging away the children of Hercules from their altars: but Euripides was too well acquainted both with the laws of the drama and poetic justice to throw out any thing beyond a distant hint relative to this flagrant breach of the laws of nations. To have exhibited on the stage the murder of an Ambassador (whose person was held sacred even among nations the most uncivilized), committed by the people, whom he on all occasions describes as models of honour and justice, would have been in him the most glaring inconsistency, and must have rendered him odious to his countrymen."—WODHULL.

DEM.—If you touch them, you shall have cause to rue it, and that on the instant.

CHORUS.—Do not, by the Gods, dare to strike a Herald.

DEM.—I will, if the Herald do not learn to behave with discretion.

CHORUS.—Depart: and do you, O king, forbear to touch him.

COPR.—I go: for the combat of a single arm is weak. But I will return, and bring with me the many brazen spears of martial Argos: for ten thousand warriors who bear the shield await my return, with Eurystheus the king their leader. At the extreme boundaries of the land of Alcatheus¹ he pauses, in expectation of an answer from this city: and with fury, when he hears your insolence, will he appear to you and to your people, to this land and to all it produces: for we should in vain possess such a flower of youth in Argos, if we did not visit you with our vengeance.

DEM.—Get you gone with a mischief! for I do not fear your boasted Argos. You shall never carry away from this altar, to my dishonour, these suppliants by force; for I do not rule this city as subject to Argos, but as free.

CHORUS.—It is time to provide for the danger, before the army of Argives approach our borders: for the war of the people of Mycenæ is ever impetuous, and it will now be more impetuous than before. It is the custom of all heralds to magnify events twice beyond the fact. How many lies, then, do you think he will tell to his masters? He will relate, that he suffered grievous wrongs, and all but lost his life.

IOLAUS.—There is no more honourable gift to children, than to have been born from a brave and virtuous father, and to intermarry with the good: for I will not praise him, who, overcome by desire, has allied himself with the bad,

(1) Alcatheus, the son of Pelops, reigned at Megara, whither he had fled after he became suspected of the murder of his brother Chrysippus. Eurystheus is of course represented as so far in advance, that the battle and other subsequent events might not appear to violate too grossly the unity of time.

so as to leave shame, instead of pleasure, to his children. Noble birth is a better shield against misfortune than a dishonourable origin; for we who had sunk to the lowest pitch of misery find these friends and kinsmen, who alone of all the countries of Greece have stood forward in our defence. Give them, O children, give them your right hands, (and you to the children;) and approach near. Ye youths, we have made proof of friends: and if ever a return to your country shall open to you, and ye shall regain your home and the honours of your father, always deem them your preservers and friends; and never, whilst you remember these benefits, lift against this land a hostile spear, but consider this as the dearest of all cities: for they are well worthy of regard, who have chosen in our behalf to make so powerful a country and the Pelasgic people their enemies, seeing us in poverty and exile, and yet refusing to give us up or to drive us from the land. But I, both in life, and in death, when its hour shall have come, shall extol you, my friend, with many praises to Theseus; and shall rejoice him, by telling how you kindly received and succoured the children of Hercules, and that, distinguished through Greece, you support the renown of your father. Sprung from an illustrious race, you prove that you have in no respect degenerated from your ancestry, unlike the generality of men; for you will find only one among many who is not inferior to his father¹.

CHORUS.—This land ever seeks in a just cause to aid those who are in a helpless state. It has therefore already sustained innumerable toils in defence of its friends: and now I see a struggle approaching.

DEM.—You have spoken well, old man; and I will confidently assert, that the feelings of these will be such: the favour shall not be forgotten. I will now hold a levy of the citizens; and will arrange, that I may meet the army of the Mycenæans with a powerful force, (first indeed sending

(1) Παῦροι γὰρ τοὶ παῖδες ὁμοῖοι πατρὶ πέλονται.
Οἱ πλείους κακίους· παῦροι δὲ τε πατρὸς ἀρείους.

Hom. Odys. II. 276.

spies to watch them, lest they fall upon us unawares, for every Argive rushes with haste to the war;) and having collected the prophets, I will offer sacrifice. But do you, leaving the altar of Jove, enter the palace with the children; for there are those there, who, even if I be abroad, will take care of you. Go then, old man, into the house.

IOLAUS.—I will not leave the altar: let us remain here, and use our supplications that the city may prosper. As soon as you have retired successfully from this contest, we will enter the house. But we do not, O king, rely upon the aid of Deities inferior to those of the Argives; for though Juno, the wife of Jove, presides over their cause, Minerva favours ours: and I assert, that it conduces to success to obtain the aid of mightier Powers; for Pallas will not submit to be overcome.

CHORUS.—Though your boasts are haughty, others do not the more regard your power, O stranger, who hast come from Argos. You shall not by the words of arrogance dismay my mind. Forbid that such feeling should ever arise in the mighty Athens, the scene of the beauteous dance! But you are devoid of sense, as well as the son of Sthenelus¹, who rules in Argos; who coming a stranger to another city not inferior to Argos, forcibly drags away exiles who are suppliants of the Gods and claim the protection of our country, without yielding to its rulers, or resting on any plea of justice. Where would such conduct be approved, by those who possessed their right judgment? Peace, indeed, is grateful to my thoughts: but I tell you, O infatuated prince, that if you come to this city you shall not so easily obtain what you expect. The spear does not

(1) "Eurystheus, Stheneli filius, qui fuit Persei ex Andromedâ. Hinc Ovidio dicitur Stheneleius, Epist. 9. *Quem non mille feræ, quem non Stheneleius hostis, Non potuit Juno vincere, vicit Amor.* Cùm jam Hercules nasciturus erat, Jupiter in concilio Deorum juravit, ut illo ipso die ex suo genere nasceretur, qui finitimis imperaret. Juno itaque in terram descendit, Argos petiit, Alcmenæ partum distulit, Archippen, Stheneli uxorem, septem tantùm mensium fœtum parere coëgit, Eurystheum postea dictum. Qui eâ ratione Argivorum regnum obtinuit, atque in Herculem imperium."—BARNES.

shine for you alone, nor the brazen boss of the shield. But I am no lover of war, and do not disturb with the spear a city which is favoured by all the Graces, but refrain from the battle¹.

IOLAUS.—My son, why have you come with this expression of care in your countenance? Have you any new tidings to announce from the enemy? Are they on the point of advancing; or are they present; or what have you learned by your inquiries? The threats of the Herald are not likely to prove false; for a leader approaches, who is encouraged by prosperity from the Gods, and who entertains, I well know it, no humble designs against Athens. But Jupiter is wont to punish thoughts of too daring pride.

DEM.—The army of the Argives is come, and Eurystheus the king. I myself have seen him; for it becomes a chief, who boasts that he is well skilled to lead an army, not to view the enemy only by spies. He has not indeed, as yet, poured in his forces on these plains of the land; but, encamped on the brow of a hill, he surveys (I speak to you my conjecture) in what way he may lead forward his forces without an engagement, and take up a station with security in this country. All my preparations, however, have been satisfactorily completed: the citizens are in arms, and the victims stand prepared for the Gods to whom² they ought to be sacrificed; and incense is offered through the city by the priests, with influence to turn the enemy and preserve our country. But, having collected together all the ex-

(1) It is singular, considering the high excellence of Euripides in lyric composition, that we have not in this play a single Chorus which exhibits the least animation of poetry. The subject was one which afforded every scope for genius; and the strong national feeling with which it was so intimately blended, was alone sufficient to have inspired a higher strain. Euripides, however, was well acquainted with the spirit of his countrymen; and he perhaps judged rightly, that paltry compliments to Athenian vanity would draw more of popular applause than the noblest effusions of the moral Muse.

(2) Certain animals were set apart as victims to peculiar Gods; as, the goat to Bacchus, and the bull to Neptune: and it is to this distinction of sacrifice that Demophon alludes.

pounders of oracles, I have searched into the prophecies of ancient date, both public and secret, which are connected with the safety of this land. In other oracles, there were many points on which they differed; but in one the opinion of all was distinctly the same. They command me to sacrifice to the daughter of Ceres a virgin who has sprung from a noble father. Now, I entertain, as you have witnessed, great zeal in your cause; but yet I will neither sacrifice my own daughter, nor compel any of my citizens against his will: and who is there with such perverted feelings as willingly to give up from his hands his dearest children to death? You will now see contending factions of the people, some saying that it is just to aid suppliant strangers, and others condemning my folly; and if I shall not do this¹, a domestic war is already kindled. Do you, therefore, see to this; and discover some means by which both ye and this country may be preserved, and I not become the object of odium to the citizens: for I do not hold this sovereignty like that of a Barbarous State, but shall only, if I do what is just, meet with the like in return².

CHORUS.—Will the God, then, not permit the wishes of this city, which is eager to assist the strangers?

IOLAUS.—My children, we are like mariners, who, having escaped the wild fury of the tempest, have all but touched³

(1) The reading which has been followed by Elmsley renders the sense of this passage obscure. The emendation of Musgrave, *ἦν δὲ μὴ σῶσω τῶδε, nisi hoc inhibuero*, would be a decided improvement, but it unfortunately is supported by no authority. Heath has with some plausibility suggested the following: "*τῶδε* ad nihil aliud referri potest, quàm ad *ἐλπίς* *ἱεράς* *ἀφίγειν*. Sed tum falsus planè oritur sensus. Itaque legendum: *ἦν δὲ μὴν ὁρῶσω τῶδε*."

(2) "Certum est, quod ait Johannes Brodæus, priscos illos reges legibus non fuisse solutos. Et æquè certum est, bonos reges et prudentes nec esse sine legibus, nec esse velle. Divina igitur M. Antonini vox: *Licet legibus soluti simus, attamen legibus vivimus*." BARNES. With respect to the power of the Barbarian kings, Elmsley has very appropriately quoted the speech of Atossa, Pers. *Æsch.* 211. to which we refer the reader.

(3) "Proverbialis, saltem familiaris apud Græcos locutio erat *εἰς χεῖρα* pro *in conspectum, propè*."—MUSGRAVE.

the shore, and then are driven back by the blasts from the land to the deep. Thus are we driven from this land, after we had gained the shore and thought ourselves safe. Ah why, wretched Hope, did you then cheer me, if you did not intend to consummate the favour? The feelings of the prince are not to be blamed, if he be not willing to slay the daughters of his citizens; and I must even praise my reception here: and if it should seem good to the Gods that I should effect my wishes¹, your favours shall not be forgotten. But, O my children! I know not what counsel to take for you. Whither can we turn? for what God have we not supplicated with the wreath? to the sanctuary of what land have we not come? We are undone, my children! we shall be delivered up. For myself, I care not if I am doomed to die, except in as far as I shall give pleasure to my enemies by my death; but I weep and lament for you, O children, and for Alcmena the aged mother of your father. O woman, unhappy in thy length of life, (but not more unhappy than I, who have endured many toils in vain,) it was fated, it was fated then, that we should fall into the hands of our enemy, and basely and ingloriously perish. But do you know what you may do in my behalf? (for all hope of preserving these children hath not left me.) Give me up instead of them, O king, to the Argives, and do not expose yourself to danger; and let my children be preserved. It does not become me to love my own life: let it go: Eurystheus would chiefly wish to seize me, that he might triumph over the companion of Hercules; for he is a foolish man. The wise ought to pray that they may engage in enmity with the wise¹, and not with the ignorant in spirit; for even if unsuccessful, one might then meet with much compassion.

(1) Or, that I should have the same fortune.

(2) Barnes has written a sermon, rather than a note, on this text. In his practical conclusion he agrees with the proposition of Iolaus: but there are few men, we should think, who would not pray, on the contrary, that if they were to have a bitter enemy, it might be one to whom his wits were feeble weapons.

CHORUS.—Do not now, old man, accuse this city: for though gain might perhaps result to us, it would be a foul reproach that we betrayed strangers.

DEM.—The proposal which you have made is generous, but impracticable. The king does not lead his forces hither in search of you; (for what benefit would there be to Eurystheus from the death of an old man?) but wishes to kill these children. For there is a terror to enemies in the growth of the noble born, who are in the vigour of youth and remember the wrongs of a father: and it may be expected that he will look to all these considerations. But if you know any other counsel that will better suit the emergency, quickly produce it; since I have been at a loss since I heard the oracles, and am full of fear.

MACARIA.¹

Do not, O strangers, impute boldness to me, because I have come forth to your presence, (I will make this my first request;) for it is most honourable for a woman to be silent and modest, and to remain quietly within the house. But having heard, O Iolaus, your groans, I came forth, not appointed to represent my kindred, but because I chanced to be near, and feel the greatest anxiety for my brothers; and wish also to inquire, for my own sake, whether any evil, added to our former misfortunes, pains your mind.

IOLAUS.—My daughter, I have not now for the first time to praise you with justice above all the children of Hercules: but our house, when it seemed to emerge into prosperity, has again sunk back into inextricable ruin; for this prince declares that the interpreters of oracles have not marked out² for a victim a bull or a heifer, but have bid him sacrifice a virgin who is sprung from a noble father, if we would have ourselves or this city preserved. In this difficulty, therefore, we are hopelessly involved; for he says

(1) Macaria was the daughter of Hercules by Deianira. Her character is beautifully developed in the scene which follows.

(2) We prefer the latter of the two interpretations which Elmsley gives of this disputed passage: "*Oraculorum enim interpretes ait hicce non taurum aut vitulum significare, sed puellam nobilem mactare jubere.*"

that he will neither slay his own children, nor those of any other parent: and to me he intimates indeed, not distinctly, but hints, that except we can extricate ourselves from this difficulty, we must seek another country, as he wishes to preserve this land.

MAC.—Can we hope to be saved on this condition?

IOLAUS.—On this only; our fortunes in other respects being prosperous.

MAC.—Do not now any longer dread the hostile spear of the Argives; for I, of my own accord, before I am commanded, am willing, old man, to die, and to be led to the sacrifice. For what could we say, if a State should deign to incur great danger on our account; and we who are the cause of trouble to others, when it is in our power to be saved, should shrink from death? May it not be so; since it were worthy even of ridicule, that we should sit and groan as suppliants of Gods, and yet, though sprung from that father to whom we owe our birth, should be discovered to be devoid of courage. How should such conduct become the good? It were more honourable, I deem, that, this city having been taken, (which may Heaven forbid!) we should fall into the hands of our enemies; and that a virgin, sprung from a noble father, should, after having suffered the worst of wrongs, not the less descend to the grave¹. But shall I become a vagrant, when banished from this land? and shall I not blush, when some one shall say, "Why have ye come hither with your suppliant boughs, yourselves so fond of life? Depart from the land; for we will not aid the base." But neither though these were dead, and I were preserved, can I hope to prosper; (though many have on this expectation betrayed their friends;) for who could wish to wed a forlorn maid, or to beget children from my embrace? Is it not then better to die, than to meet undeservedly with such indignities? They would more befit the lot of one whose origin was less distinguished than mine. Lead me to the place where it is fated that this body should die; and crown me with garlands, and

(1) This sentence, it will be observed, is spoken ironically.

begin, if ye think it good, the rites of sacrifice; and conquer the enemy: for this life is offered willingly, and without reluctance, and I proclaim that I die for the safety of my brothers and for my own honour. By this contempt of life I gain the highest reward—the fame of a glorious death¹.

CHORUS.—Alas! alas! what shall I say, having heard the magnanimous speech of the virgin, who is willing to die for her brothers? Who of mortals could utter more generous words, or aspire to a nobler deed?

IOLAUS.—My child, your life hath not been derived from a spurious source, but from the genuine seed and divine spirit of Hercules; nor do I aught but glory in your words, though I sorrow for your fate. But I will explain how this award may be rendered more just. It is fitting that we should summon hither the sisters of this virgin; and let her, to whom the lot falls, die in behalf of the race: but it were not just that you should be the victim, without the decision of the lot.

MAC.—I will not submit to die according as Fortune shall dispense; for no merit would attach to the sacrifice. Do not name it, old man. But if ye will accept me, and are willing to avail yourselves of my free zeal, I voluntarily resign my life for these, but not upon compulsion.

IOLAUS.—Alas! the speech you have now made is even more generous than the former, and that was most noble; but you surpass in courage your former courage, and the merit of your former words, by the present. I do not, my child, command, nor forbid your death; but by the sacrifice of your life you will benefit your brothers.

MAC.—You enjoin me wisely: be not afraid lest you share in the pollution of my death, for I die of my free accord. But follow me, old man, for I wish to die in your

(1) "Cum hæc Macariæ oratione comparanda Polyxænæ oratio in Hec. 342. Iphigeniæ in Iph. A. 1368. Praxithææ in Erectheo. Omnes locis communibus refertæ sunt, quarum multò patientiores fuerunt Athenienses quàm nostri homines." ELMSLEY. We are reluctant to express any dissent from the opinions of such an accomplished critic, but we cannot help thinking that the speeches of which he talks so slightly are imbued with a pathos and simplicity which have been rarely equalled.

arms; and do you, being present, veil my body beneath its robes¹. I shall meet without fear the horrors of slaughter, if I have sprung from the father from whom I boast my birth.

IOLAUS.—I cannot bear to be present at your death.

MAC.—But do you then request of the king, that I may breathe my last, not in the hands of men, but of women.

DEM.—O unhappy virgin, your request shall be granted (for it were disgraceful to me if I did not duly deck your obsequies) on account of many reasons, both for your courage of soul and your principles of virtue. Of all women that my eyes have beheld, you are the firmest in spirit. But if you would address any thing to these youths, or to the old man, go, after having uttered to them your last words.

MAC.—Farewell, old man, farewell; and teach, I pray you, these boys to be wise in every thing in the same degree as you are, but not farther; for they shall thus have enough. But strive to preserve them, and be not anxious to die. We are your children; by your hands we have been reared: and you see even me sacrificing my bridal prime to die in their behalf. But may ye, my band of brothers who are present, be favoured of Heaven! and may there result to you all those blessings for which my heart shall bleed! Forget not to honour this aged man, and the aged woman within the house, Alcmena, the mother of my father, and these strangers; and if ever a release from your toils, if ever a return to your country be granted to

(1) "Euripides, poetarum castissimus et decori amantissimus, semper virginum pudori consulit egregiè: sic de Polyxenâ loquens Hecub. v. 568. Ἡ δὲ, καὶ θήσκουσ', ὅμως Πολλὴν πρόνοιαν εἶχεν εὐσχήμως πεσεῖν, κρύπτειν θ', ἀ κρύπτειν ὄμματ' ἀρσένων χρεόν. Idem narratur de Julio Cæsare, quando in Senatu moribundus cecidit, de quâ re vid. Suetonium. Hinc Ovid. Fastorum, Lib. II. ad finem de Lucretiâ: *Tunc quoque jam moriens, ne non procumbat honestè, Respicit: hæc etiam cura cadentis erat.* Eodem modo et hîc loci Macaria pudoris sui curam seni Iolao moritura commendat, quem sanctum et amicissimum familiæ suæ sciebat." BARNES.
—Nothing can be more highly ludicrous than the mention of Julius Cæsar, in the middle of the note, among the examples of modesty in virgins.

you by the Gods, remember to bury, as she deserves, her who died to save you. It were just that my tomb should be most honourable; for I have not been deficient in love for you, but die in behalf of the race. Such treasures must suffice to me for children and for my unenjoyed virginity¹, if there be any feeling beneath the earth. But haply there is none: and in truth, if departed mortals are still subject to cares in the Shades, I know not of any solace to which man can turn; for death has been accounted the sovereign cure for the evils of his condition.

IOLAUS.—O virgin, who highly excellest in loftiness of soul, know that you are the most honourable of all women, and that you shall be so esteemed by us both in life and death. And now, farewell: for I fear to utter words of evil omen against the Goddess, the daughter of Ceres, to whom your body is already consecrated². My sons, I perish: my limbs fail beneath me through grief: support me, O children, and place me on that seat, and there cover me up with these garments. I am neither pleased with the issue of this event, nor, if the oracle had not been fulfilled, could we have preserved our lives: for that would have been the greater calamity; but even the present is grievous.

CHORUS.—I say, that no mortal is blessed with happiness, or condemned to misery, without the sanction of the Gods; and that the same house does not always continue in prosperity; but that, now to one, and now to another, a different fate arrives. One man, indeed, it will reduce from grandeur to humble state; and the destitute wanderer it will make the favoured of Fortune. It is not permitted us to shun our destiny, and by no device shall any one repel its decrees; but he who strives for such an object shall ever endure vain toil. But do you submit to the dispensations

(1) In like manner we find Antigone represented by Sophocles as lamenting for the same reasons her untimely death. The more noted instance of Jephtha's daughter shews how generally, in the ancient world, the idea of disgrace was supposed to attach to such a fate.

(2) Macaria at this moment leaves the stage, and proceeds to the scene of sacrifice.

of Heaven, without falling prostrate to earth¹; and do not distress your spirit with excess of grief; for the unhappy maid, who falls for her brothers and for this land, obtains the lot of death with glory; and no obscure renown awaits her among men. Virtue advances on its path through sufferings. These deeds are worthy of her father, and worthy of her noble strain; and if you feel reverence for the deaths of the good, I participate in your sentiments.

SERVANT.

Hail, ye children! But where is the aged Iolaus? and how is the mother of your father absent from this seat?

IOLAUS.—I am present; such, indeed, as my presence is.

SERV.—Why do you lie on the earth, and wear that downcast look?

IOLAUS.—Private griefs have reached me, by which I am oppressed.

SERV.—Now raise yourself from that posture, and lift your head.

IOLAUS.—I am an old man, and my strength is gone.

SERV.—I come, however, with tidings of great joy to you.

IOLAUS.—But who are you? Where, having met with you, have I lost the remembrance?

SERV.—I am the attendant² of Hyllus. Do you not recognise me by sight?

IOLAUS.—O dearest of men! have you come, then, to be our preserver from misfortune?

SERV.—Without doubt: nay more, you are prosperous in your present circumstances.

IOLAUS.—O mother of a gallant son, I mean Alcmena, come forth and hear the dearest tidings of this messenger! for you long since pined in soul through anguished doubt if the arrival of those who have now come would occur.

(1) The Chorus here address Iolaus, who, according to Beck, "ad terram prostratus in remotâ quâdam theatri parte remanet."

(2) "Thessali, secundum Athenæum, p. 264. *πενέστας* vocabant, τοὺς μὴ γόνυ δοῦλους, διὰ πόλεμον δὲ ἡλωκότας. Aliter Archemachus ibidem citatus. Secundum eum *πενέστας* is fuerit, qui, pacto cum victore inito, pro agri sui usufructu certum vectigal pendit. Confer Theocrit. Idyll. XVI. v. 35. et interpretes Hesychii in voce."—MUSGRAVE.

ALCMENA.

Why is all this edifice filled with clamour? O Iolaus! does some herald being present from Argos again assail you with violence? My strength indeed is feeble; but you ought, O stranger, to know this much, that you shall never, while I am alive, carry off these children. If you might, I should assuredly be no longer deemed the mother of their father: and if you touch them with your hands, you shall have to contend without honour against two aged opponents.

IOLAUS.—Be of good cheer, O aged matron, and do not fear. He hath not come a herald from Argos, bearing a hostile message.

ALC.—Why, then, did you raise that cry, the harbinger of fear?

IOLAUS.—That you might approach near, in front of this temple.

ALC.—I know not what you mean: for who is this man?

IOLAUS.—He announces that the son of your son is coming hither.

ALC.—O welcome are you on account of your tidings! But why, if he has approached his steps to this land, and where, is he now absent? What circumstance has prevented him from appearing here, along with you, to delight my soul?

SERV.—He is placing in position, and marshalling, the army which he brought with him.

ALC.—There is no longer, then, any share to me in this conference.

IOLAUS.—There is; but it is my part to inquire into the particulars.

SERV.—What do you wish to learn with respect to his proceedings?

IOLAUS.—How great a number of allies has he present with him?

SERV.—Many: but I cannot give any other account of their numbers.

IOLAUS.—The chiefs of the Athenians, I presume, are acquainted with these circumstances.

SERV.—They are: and the left wing, indeed, is already formed.

IOLAUS.—Is the army, then, already arrayed in arms, as if for action?

SERV.—Yes; and the victims have been led apart from the ranks.

IOLAUS.—How far distant are still the Argive spears?

SERV.—So that their leader can be clearly seen.

IOLAUS.—How occupied? in forming the ranks of the enemy?

SERV.—We suppose so; for we have not heard. But I go; for I would not wish, as far as I am concerned, that my masters should engage, without my aid, with the enemy.

IOLAUS.—And I will join you: for I feel the same desire, being present, to assist, as it behoves us, our friends.

SERV.—It little becomes you to speak a foolish word.

IOLAUS.—And less would it become me not to share in the valiant combat with my friends.

SERV.—No wound is inflicted by appearing on the field, if the hand is inactive.

IOLAUS.—How? Can I not strike, too, through the shield?

SERV.—You might strike; but you are first more likely to fall yourself.

IOLAUS.—No one of the enemy will endure to look on me.

SERV.—The strength, my friend, which was once yours is departed.

IOLAUS.—I am prepared, however, to fight with no smaller number of foes.

SERV.—You will add but little weight to your friends.

IOLAUS.—Do not withhold me, prepared for action.

SERV.—You are not fit for action, though perhaps you are willing.

IOLAUS.—You may say what more you please, but I remain no longer.

SERV.—How then shall you appear as a warrior without arms?

IOLAUS.—There are beneath this roof, arms which have been taken in war; of which I will make use, and return

them again if I live: but from the dead the God will not demand them back. Go within, and, taking down a suit of armour from the nails in the wall, bring it quickly to me; for it were disgraceful to stay in safety at home, that some indeed should fight, and others keep back through cowardice.

CHORUS.—Time has not yet quelled your spirit, which retains the vigour of youth; but the strength of the body is gone. Why should you attempt these vain toils, which will hurt you, and be of little avail to our city? It were fitting that you should know the weakness of your age, and relinquish what is beyond its power. It is impossible that you should ever regain your youth.

ALC.—For what purpose do you design, being deprived of your senses, to leave me deserted along with my children?

IOLAUS.—The battle belongs to men; but it is your part to take care of these young ones.

ALC.—But how if you die; in what way shall I be saved?

IOLAUS.—This will be a care to the sons of your son who survive.

ALC.—But if, (what Heaven forbid!) they should meet a different fortune?

IOLAUS.—These strangers, you may depend, will never betray you.

ALC.—Such ground of hope alone, and nought else, I possess.

IOLAUS.—And Jove, I know, will regard your toils.

ALC.—Alas! Jove indeed shall not be reviled by my lips: but he knows himself if he has been a benign Power to me.

SERV.—You now see this full suit of armour; and you cannot make too much haste in clothing your body with it; for the conflict is nigh, and Mars most of all detests the tardy. But if you fear the weight of the mail now indeed, advance unarmed, and in the ranks array yourself in these equipments; for I will bear them to the field.

IOLAUS.—You have spoken well: carry my arms as you hold them ready, place the spear in my hand, and support my left arm, directing my steps.

SERV.—Is it becoming to lead a warrior like a child?

IOLAUS.—I must walk securely, for the sake of the omen¹.

SERV.—I wish you were as powerful in action as you are zealous in spirit!

IOLAUS.—Hasten on: I shall suffer much grief if too late for the battle.

SERV.—You delay, and not I; though you think that you are active.

IOLAUS.—Do you not see how quickly my foot is hurried along?

SERV.—I see you seeming to hasten, more than hastening.

IOLAUS.—You will not say this, when you see me on the field.

SERV.—Performing what exploit? I pray that I may see you prospering.

IOLAUS.—Piercing, through his shield, some enemy——

SERV.—If we ever get to the scene of action: for this is to be feared.

IOLAUS.—Alas! Would, O my arm, that, as I remember your youthful vigour when with Hercules you laid waste Sparta², you would now prove to me such an ally, that I may be able to put Eurystheus to flight! for he, in truth, lacks courage to await the spear. But there is in prosperity this erroneous consequence, the opinion of valour; for we think that the man who is fortunate knows every thing well.

CHORUS.—O Earth, and Moon resplendent through night, and ye refulgent rays of the God who gives light to mortals, bear to me the tidings, and make them resound through the sky and beside the royal throne and in the temple of the blue-eyed Minerva. Having received the suppliants, I am now, in defence of my native land and of

(1) "Iolaus veretur, ne ipsius pes offendant, quia id malum habebatur omen. Eandem nunc quoque recentiorum Græcorum opinionem à Guysio docet Prevost."—BECK.

(2) "Hæc ad historiam spectant, quæ ait, Herculem ob cæsum Æonum, filium Licymnii, Hippocoontidas et Lacedæmoniam bello petiisse, victisque iis et urbe Spartâ eversâ sub Tyndaro redegissee. Hoc verò præcipue hîc ab Euripide memoratur, quia Lacedæmonios caros non habuit."—BARNES.

my home, about to encounter danger with the gleaming steel. It is terrible, indeed, that a city so prosperous as Mycenæ, and so renowned for prowess in war, should cherish wrath against my country: but it were base, O city, if we should deliver up suppliant strangers; and it might prove the cause of deadly grief. Jove is my ally: I will not fear. Jove, with justice, favours my cause: and never have the Gods been seen inferior to mortals. But, O hallowed Power, (for the soil of this land is thine, and the city, of which thou art the founder, queen and guardian,) drive to some other region the chief who unjustly leads against this land the spears of his host from Argos! for it were not right that I should be forced, on account of my virtuous feelings, to quit these courts. To thee the honour of the plenteous sacrifice is ever paid¹ (nor is the waning day of the months forgotten); to thee swell the songs of the youths, and the strains of our choirs; and on thy wind-swept hill² the shouts of joy resound, through the live-long night, to the echoing steps of virgins in the dance.

SERV.—O Queen, I bear tidings which are very brief for you to hear, and most glorious for me to tell: we have conquered the enemy, and trophies have been erected which bear the armour of your foes.

ALC.—O dearest messenger, this day hath advanced you to freedom on account of your tidings. But you have not yet freed me from the apprehension of one calamity; for I fear if they live, for whose safety I pray.

SERV.—They live, and are celebrated in the army for their glory.

ALC.—Is the old man, Iolaus, no more?

SERV.—He not only lives, but has, by the favour of the Gods, performed illustrious exploits.

ALC.—What were they? Did he display any valour in the strife?

(1) The Chorus allude to the greater Panathenæa, which were celebrated by the Athenians, with the utmost splendour, in honour of their tutelary Goddess.

(2) The Acropolis.

SERV.—From an old man he changed again to youth.

ALC.—You tell wonders. But I wish you first to describe the prosperous contest of my friends in fight.

SERV.—One speech of mine shall explain to you all that you wish to know. When we had set in array the armed forces against each other, extending their lines in front, Hyllus, dismounting from his four-horsed chariot, stood in the space that intervened between the points of the opposing spears, and then spoke: "O leader, who hast come from Argos, why should we not permit this land * * * * * and you will do no harm to Mycenæ by depriving her of one man. Do you, therefore, singly encounter in battle with my single spear; and, either slaying me, take and carry away the children of Hercules; or, dying, permit me to regain the honours and the house of my father." The troops assented to the words, as having been well spoken for putting an end to their toils, and as a proof of courage: but Eurystheus, neither feeling shame on account of those who heard the challenge, nor, though the leader of an army, for his own cowardice, had not courage to approach the warlike spear, but proved the basest dastard: and yet, though he was such in spirit, he came to enslave the children of Hercules. Hyllus, therefore, again retreated to his station; and the priests, when they perceived that no peace was likely to be effected by the single combat, proceeded with the sacrifice; and, no longer delaying, shed the blood of propitious omen from the throat of the human victim¹. Then some mounted

(1) Some verses have here been lost; but the purport of them is sufficiently obvious from the context.

(2) This slight allusion contains all the mention that is made of the sacrifice of Macaria, from the time that she leaves the stage to the end of the play. Barnes has supposed that the Messenger studiously avoided the subject, in order that he might spare the feelings of Almena; but even though such had been the design of the poet in this particular passage, it would not excuse the defects of the drama in the unfinished management of its most important event, nor in the ungrateful silence in which the parties most interested and obliged pass over the generous sacrifice by which their lives and freedom were preserved.

the chariot, and some protected their sides with the sides of their shields; and the king of the Athenians exhorted his army in such words as became a gallant leader: "Now is the time, my countrymen, for each of you to aid the land of his nurture and his birth." In like manner Eurystheus implored¹ those who fought by his side not to be willing to disgrace Argos and Mycenæ. But when the signal blast arose on high from the Tuscan trumpet, and they rushed together to the fight, what din of shields do you think there resounded, what uproar, and what mingled shrieks! At first, indeed, the onset² of the Argive spear broke our ranks; and then they retreated: but afterwards, foot being planted against foot, and man standing against man, the battle thickened, and many fell. Then might these exhortations he heard: "O ye who dwell in Athens, O ye who cultivate the fields of the Argives, will ye not repel dishonour from your country?" At length, with difficulty, using every exertion, and not without severe toil, we turned the Argive spear to flight: and at this period the aged Iolaus, seeing Hyllus rushing to the pursuit, stretched forth his right hand, and entreated him to place him in the equestrian chariot. But when he had got the reins in his hands, he pressed after the horses of Eurystheus. What afterwards happened, I must relate from the report of others; but to this point I was an eye-witness of what I have described. Having descried the chariot of Eurystheus, as he passed the sacred hill of the divine Minerva at Pallene³, he prayed to Hebe and Jove that he might

(1) Elmsley supposes the word *ἐλίσσαιο* to be used for the purpose of denoting the cowardice of Eurystheus by the servility of his entreaties. This remark is the offspring of hypercritical ingenuity: and it might even be more correctly urged, on the opposite side, that the earnest language of Eurystheus was a proof of his zeal and courage as a general.

(2) "*πύλος*. Impressio simul ab omnibus facta."—BARNES.

(3) "The Pallene here spoken of, by the slight accounts of it which Brodæus has collected from Stephanus Byzantinus and Herodotus, appears to have been a small town in Attica, situated between Athens and Marathon, the scene of this tragedy. From Minerva being called the Pallanian Goddess, we must infer that the temple there erected to her

again become young for that one day, and take vengeance on his enemies. You shall now hear of the miracle that ensued: for two stars, appearing above the yoke of the horses, concealed the chariot in a thick cloud¹. The wiser said that these were your son and Hebe: but the aged warrior, when the gloomy darkness had passed, displayed the vigorous shape of youthful arms. Near the rocks of Sciron the illustrious Iolaus took the four-horsed chariot of Eurystheus; and having bound his hands with fetters, he comes bringing, as his glorious spoils, the leader who was wont to be crowned with success, but who, by his present fortune, declares clearly, for the instruction of all mortals, that they ought not to envy him who appears to be prosperous, till they have seen his last day; since human prosperity is as fleeting as the hour.

CHORUS.—O Jupiter, God of trophies, now is it given to me to behold a day free from dreadful fear!

ALC.—O Jupiter! it was late indeed when thou didst regard my misfortunes, but I still feel grateful to thee for the events which thou hast awarded; and I now know, clearly, that my son is ranked among the Gods, with whom I formerly did not deem that he had a place. My children, ye shall now be free from your toils; and free from Eurystheus, who shall perish with shame: and ye shall behold the city of your father, and enter into the possession of your inheritance, and sacrifice to the Gods of your country, from whom excluded ye have led among strangers a wretched wandering life. But what scheme can Iolaus cherish, that he spared Eurystheus so as not to slay him? Tell me: for in my thoughts it is not wise to refrain from

was one of the most celebrated in the Athenian territories, which it is well known were crowded with her altars, she being considered as the tutelary Deity of the land, and having given her name to its capital city.”—WODHULL.

(1) “Fingunt poëtae Deorum per aëra trajectum lucido limite, qualis est stellæ cadentis notari. Phænomenon igitur quod ob oculos ponere voluit Euripides, hujusmodi est: cecidisse de cælo in currum Iolai duas sive faces, sive (ut cum vulgo loquamur) stellas; earum lumine extincto, currum tenebris involutum fuisse.”—MUSGRAVE.

taking vengeance on enemies when you have them in your power.

SERV.—He spared him through respect to you, that you might behold him vanquished and at the mercy of your hand. Not with his own consent, but by force, he constrained him to this necessity; for he did not wish to appear alive in your presence and to suffer punishment. But farewell, O aged dame; and remember, at the same time, what you first said when I began my tale, that you would set me free; for in such promises it becomes the noble to be true to their words.

CHORUS.—To me, indeed, the dance is sweet, if the beauteous melody of the flute, and Venus the Goddess of delight, be present at the feast. But there is a pleasure, too, in witnessing the prosperity of friends who before were in humble state: for Fate consummating her decrees, and Time the offspring of Saturn, give birth to many changes. You follow, O my country, the path of justice (from which you ought never to deviate), in honouring the Gods; for he who denies them worship, after these signs that have been revealed, is little removed from madness. The God gives no dubious warning to the world, by thus ever humbling the pride of the unjust. Your son, O aged Alcmena, hath passed to heaven—(I spurn the tale that he descended to the mansions of Pluto, having his body consumed by the dreadful blaze of fire¹); and in its courts of gold he enjoys the enamoured embrace of Hebe. O Hymen, thou hast graced with thine honours two of the children of Jove². Many events coincide to many individuals: for they say that Minerva succoured the father³ of these children; and now have the city and people of that Goddess preserved

(1) Hercules, when tortured by the poisoned vest of the Centaur, was said to have flung himself on a pyre on Mount Ceta, and to have been burnt to death.

(2) Hercules and Hebe.

(3) “Palladem Herculis in omnibus ferè laboribus adjutricem fuisse, satis docebit vel unus Homerus, *Il. Ø. v. 362.*”—MUSGRAVE.

his offspring. The insolence of the tyrant has been repressed, by whom the fury of his will was more regarded than justice. May never a spirit of pride be mine, nor a soul insatiate in its desires!

MESSENGER.

O Queen, (you see indeed, but still it shall be expressed,) we come bringing to you Eurystheus¹, a sight unexpected by you, as no less was the fate by him: for he little thought that he should fall into your hands, when he marched from Mycenæ with his ponderous shields, possessed with a hope, beyond his fortune, that he should give Athens to destruction. But the God thwarted his designs, and reversed his fortunes. Hyllus and the brave Iolaus have therefore erected to Jove, the God of trophies, the image of glorious victory: and they have commanded me to conduct this man to your presence, wishing to delight your mind: for it is the highest gratification to behold an enemy reduced from prosperity to misfortune.

ALC.—O detested wretch! have you come? and has Justice at length made you her prey? First then, I pray you, turn your head in this direction, and dare to look your enemies in the face; for now you are the slave, and no longer the master. Are you he (for I wish to know it) who thought fit, O villain, to work a thousand wrongs against my son, who no longer lives? For what insults did you not dare to heap on him? You even made him descend alive to Hades; and sent him, at your command, to slay Hydras and lions; and wrought him many other evils, of which I am silent; for it would take me long to recount them. Nor have you been satisfied with having only dared these deeds; but you have driven me and his children from all Greece, forcing away both the old and young from their suppliant posture at the altar of the Gods. But now you have met with brave men, and a free city, who feared

(1) The ancient traditions vary concerning the fate of Eurystheus; but it seems to have been most generally thought that he perished in the battle.

you not. It is fated that you should perish miserably, though you shall thus have great gain; for it were just, after the many crimes that you have committed, that you should not only once die.

MESS.—It is not lawful for you to put this man to death.

ALC.—We have, then, made him captive in vain. Is there any law which forbids his death?

MESS.—It does not seem good to the rulers of this land.

ALC.—What means this? Do they not account it honourable to slay enemies?

MESS.—Not such as they take alive in the battle.

ALC.—And did Hyllus submit to these decrees?

MESS.—It would have well become him, I ween, to disobey this State.

ALC.—It is not fit that he should live; and that he should see this light.

MESS.—The mistake was made in not putting him to death at first.

ALC.—Is it, then, no longer honourable that he should suffer punishment?

MESS.—There is no one who may now slay him.

ALC.—I will: and yet I consider that I am some one.

MESS.—You will incur much blame, if you do this deed.

ALC.—I love this city, it is not to be denied: but now that this man has fallen into my hands, there lives no mortal that shall rescue him. Let any one, therefore, that pleases, call me bold, and prompt to more daring counsels than become a woman; but still shall this deed be accomplished by my hands.

CHORUS.—I am well aware, O woman, that you have a strong and a pardonable motive for bearing hatred to this man.

EURYSTHEUS.—Be well assured, O woman, that I shall not flatter you; nor say any thing else in supplication for my life, from which I might incur any imputation of cowardice. It was not willingly that I began this contention; no

indeed, being by birth your cousin, and the kinsman of Hercules you son¹. But whether I wished or not (for it was the will of a Deity), Juno afflicted me with this disease. And when I had entered into enmity with Hercules, and had determined to sustain this contest, I became the contriver of many toils; and often holding conference with the Night¹, I gave birth to various schemes, that, having harassed and slain my enemies, I might dwell for the future apart from fear, knowing that your son was not one of the common crowd, but in truth a man: for though he was my enemy, he shall yet, as a brave man, receive his just fame from me. But when he was no more, was it not fitting that I, who was hated by his children, and was conscious of the enmity they inherited from their father, should leave no stone unturned, in my attempts to slay them and to banish them, and in all my designs against them? By acting thus, my own safety was secured²: and would you, if you had been placed in the same situation, not have persecuted with evils the hateful offspring of the hostile lion, but have tamely suffered them to dwell in Argos? You cannot persuade any one that you would. Since, then, they have not now destroyed me when I was ready to die, I cannot, by the laws of the Greeks, be put to death without pollution to the slayer: and the city, observing discretion, hath declared me free, more respecting the God than its enmity to me. You have spoken, and heard in reply; and you may now call the same person both a suppliant and yet brave: for such at present is my case. I am not indeed anxious to die, but I shall not feel pain if I must relinquish my life.

(1) Sthenelus, the son of Perseus, was the father of Eurystheus, and Electryon the grandson: or, according to others, the son of Perseus was the father of Alcmena.

(1) "De Nocte, tanquam personâ, loquitur. Sic Νύκτι κοινάσartes ὄδόν. Pindar. Pyth. IV."—MUSGRAVE.

(2) On the same base principle, Ulysses advised the Greeks to kill Astyanax, the son of Hercules, lest at some future time they might experience his vengeance.

CHORUS.—I wish, O Alcmena, humbly to advise you to spare this man, since it seems good to the State.

ALC.—But what, if he should both die, and we should not disobey the State?

CHORUS.—This would be best: but how can it be done?

ALC.—I shall easily explain it to you: slaying this man, I will then give up his dead body to those of his friends that seek it: for with respect to his body, I shall not be disobedient to your country, and he by death shall suffer just vengeance from me.

EUR.—Slay me! I do not implore your mercy. But since this city has spared me, and been restrained by a pious feeling from taking my life, I will bestow on it an ancient oracle of Apollo, which in after-time shall benefit it more than you will suppose. For you shall bury my body, where it is fated to lie, before the temple of the divine Virgin of Pallene: and there, though in a foreign country, I shall ever lie beneath its soil, with friendship for you, and with power to protect your city; but most hostile to the descendants of this race, when they shall come hither with numerous forces¹, betraying your kindness: such are the guests you have defended. How, then, if I knew these things, should I have come hither, and not have paid respect to the oracle of the God? Because I deemed that Juno was more powerful than the oracles, and that she would not betray me. But neither pour libations to me, nor suffer blood to be shed on my tomb: for in return for these things, I shall be the cause to them of an evil return: and ye shall obtain from me a double benefit; for I shall both assist you and work mischief by my death to them.

ALC.—Why, then, do ye delay (if it is your duty to gain the means of safety to your country and to your posterity) to put this man to death, when ye hear these words? For he points out the safest way. The man, indeed, is an

(1) "Quod fecerunt Lacedæmonii, Heracidarum posteri, plus semel belli Peloponnesiaci tempore."—MUSGRAVE.

enemy; but he will confer benefits by his death. Conduct him apart, ye attendants: and it were fitting, that, when you had slain him, you should cast his body to the dogs: for do not expect that you shall ever again in life expel me from my native land.

CHORUS.—The same sentiments are mine. Go, ye attendants: for, as far as regards my part, there shall no blame attach to our rulers.

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